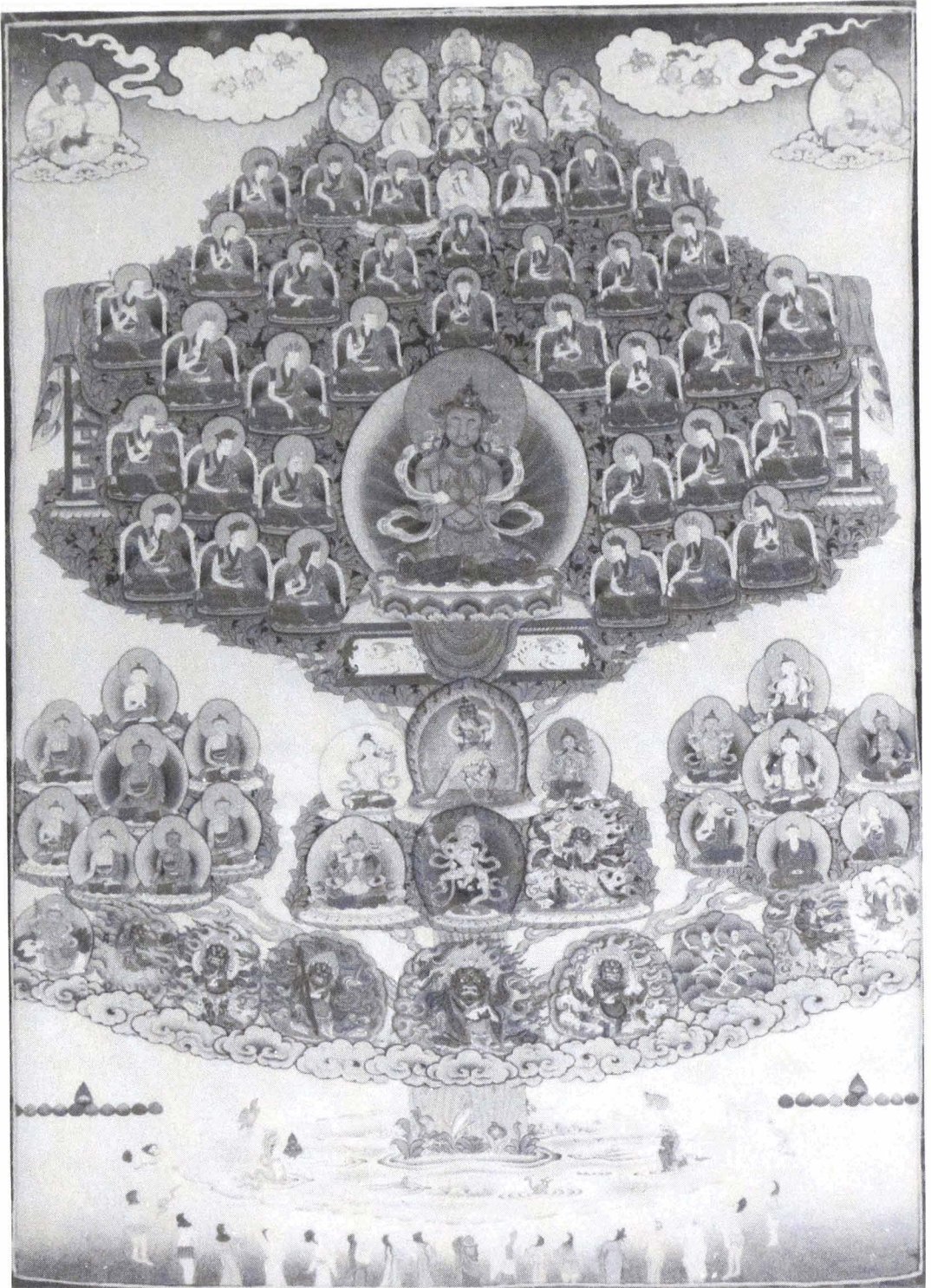# DREAMS OF POWER

Tibetan Buddhism and the Western Imagination

Peter Bishop

The Karma-Kargyudpa Lineage Tree. (See Chapter Seven.)

DREAMS OF POWER

Tibetan Buddhism and the Western Imagination

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The psyche creates reality everyday. The only expression I can use for this activity is *fantasy*

(Jung. *CW* 6, para. 78)

CONTENTS

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the result of over fifteen years of involvement with Tibetan Buddhism, as a student, as an instructor, as an organizer and also in a more detached, sociological or psychoanalytic role as a participant-observer. I believe the work reflects this insider/outsider position. It also reflects my involvement with archetypal psychology which has spanned precisely the same period of time.

The disquiet that I felt in the late 1970s about the way Tibetan Buddhism had become established in the West, not just in the new communities with the problematic relationship between Gurus and students, but also in the basic daily engagement between individuals and teachings, has since been confirmed by numerous other people. There seemed to be a complete lack of critical reflection on the immensely complex cross-cultural problems associated with the transfer of a system of wisdom/knowledge from one culture to another. At one extreme this resulted in an unquestioning and naïve adulation, whilst at the other end was an arrogant picking and choosing of the bits that could prove useful. Both attitudes, I believe, sprang from the same source—a kind of cultural imperialism, with all its associations of power and guilt.

This study, therefore, sets out to explore a way of engagement that could prove useful for scholars and practitioners alike, both of Buddhism and depth psychology. It also provides a valuable approach for anthropologists and sociologists—at least I certainly hope so. I believe an understanding of these imaginal interfaces between diverse cultural traditions to be vital in the closing years of the twentieth century as increasing volumes of wisdom/knowledge/power—religious, environmental, medical, dietary, scientific, political—are transferred from one culture to another.

There are many people I would like to thank but their individual names are too numerous to mention. Therefore, I simply thank my teachers, colleagues, friends and students, and hope that they will accept my gratitude.

Earlier versions of parts of Chapters Two, Three and Seven

have previously appeared as a monograph in the Charles Strong Lectures Series (*Tibet in its Place,* 1983); or as 'Archetypal Topography: The Karma-Kargyudpa Lineage Tree', *Spring 1981;* 'The Imagination of Place: Tibet', *Spring 1984;* 'Jung, Eastern Religion, and the Language of Imagination; *The Eastern Buddhist,* XVII, 1, 1984; and as 'Buddhism, Jungian Studies and the Language of Imagination; in *Under the Shade of the Coolibah Tree* (Australian Studies in Consciousness), ed. R. Hutch and P. Fenner, (1984), New York: University of America Press.

Peter Bishop

January 1992

DREAMS OF POWER

1—An Imaginative Analysis

'Is it not, therefore, our first duty to rediscover the spirit be-
hind the forms of Tibetan tradition and the original meaning
of sacred symbols and ritual before we try to take them over
like lifeless relics of a dead past? This would be their final
death and our own spiritual emasculation.'

(Govinda, 1976, p. 193)

The story of the Western reaction to Tibet and its religion is far
wider than the limited circle of Buddhologists and Tibetologists.[1]
It embraces the concerns of imperialism, psychotherapy, science,
theosophy and alternative religions, psychadelics, adventure
travel, exploration, mountaineering and the ecology movement.
Such a story demands bold and sweeping outlines. This study
draws upon an extraordinarily wide range of sources, including:
reports by explorers and travellers, works by Western Buddhists,
Tibetologists, scholars in religion, mystics, psychologists, thera-
pists, physicists, returned soldiers, poets, novelists, photogra-
phers, playwrights, musicians and journalists. It also draws on my
own experiences and my research of Tibetan Buddhist communi-
ties in Asia and in the West. Tibetan Buddhism has profoundly
touched the Western imagination in a surprisingly widespead way
and has done so for well over a hundred years.

In texts that seem quite remote from Tibet, one often catches
just a glimpse of its landscape and its religion. These brief refer-
ences are as important to a study of the imagination as are the
extensive scholastic essays or the equally numerous practical
guides to Tibetan metaphysics. Four such tantalizing moments
remain with me: After Sherlock Holmes survives his plunge into
the Reichenbach Falls, locked in mortal combat with the arch-
criminal Professor Moriarty, he goes to Tibet disguised as a Nor-
wegian explorer named Sigerson. It is from Tibet that Conan
Doyle has Holmes reborn. Tibet marks the furthest point of
Holmes's absence (1980, p. 569). In another extract, after their

classic encounter with the immortal She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed, somewhere in late nineteenth-century Africa, Rider Haggard has his protagonists summarily declare that they will go to Central Asia and Tibet, 'where, if anywhere on this earth, wisdom is to be found, and we anticipate that our sojourn there will be a long one. Possibly we shall not return' (1971, pp. 7–8). Tibet is summoned quickly into the story as if it is a beacon from which some essential bearing can be taken. It stands like an isolated and remote witness to Western imaginings. The third glimpse of Tibet comes from the influential Marxist critic Walter Benjamin. In the middle of his 1929 essay on 'Surrealism', Benjamin recounts what he felt to be a quietly dramatic experience:

> In Moscow I lived in a hotel in which almost all the rooms were occupied by Tibetan Lamas who had come to Moscow for a congress of Buddhist Churches. I was struck by the number of doors in the corridors that were always left ajar. What had at first seemed accidental began to be disturbing. I found out that in these rooms lived members of a sect who had sworn never to occupy closed rooms.

It seems that anything is plausible in Tibet. What would be a surreal event in the West seems as if it could be an everyday occurrence in that remote country. In Benjamin's vignette, Tibet is still full of magical possibilities (1979, p. 228). About the same time as Benjamin's shock in a Moscow hotel, the French poet and dramatist Antonin Artaud, from the depths of his pain, wrote an open letter to the Dalai Lama imploring him to redeem the West: 'O Grand Lama, give us, grace us with your illuminations in a language our contaminated European minds can understand, and if need be, transform our Mind . . .' (1972, pp. 64–5).

It would be difficult to find any briefer glimpses of Tibet than these, yet they each portray a rich and compelling landscape. Conan Doyle's Tibet is unknown, far away, almost totally Other. It is touched by absence, by death and by return. A detective takes time out and becomes an explorer. A geographical underworld of unknown landscapes replaces those of industrial society. The eye for details, for 'the facts', remains vital in both fantasies. Haggard's Tibet lies at the end of an aspiration. It sets some exemplary standard in Wisdom. It is where one goes when all else fails or has been attempted. It is not a place of absence and return but of promise and transcendence. Benjamin's Tibet has a revolutionary potential in the West. It is enigmatic and imaginatively bold. It is surreal. The revolutions of dialectical materialism and of the

imagination meet in the corridors of his Moscow hotel. Artaud's Tibet is the land of omniscience and compassion, the home of a benevolent father.

In each of these images of Tibet is also mirrored an image of the West: for Conan Doyle, Tibet's remoteness defines Europe's centrality and its familiarity; Haggard's Tibet underlines Western prosaicness; Benjamin evokes Tibet in a criticism of Western bourgeois disenchantment; Artaud's Tibet stands in contrast to the West's spiritual contamination, suffering, ignorance.

Such vignettes continue to appear in the West. For example, in the much acclaimed TV series 'Twin Peaks', by the American director David Lynch, the quirky FBI agent investigating the bizarre murder of a beautiful woman in a small town, desperately reaches for inspiration not only from Tibetan occult practices, but also from the very place of Tibet itself. At the same time, in the immediate wake of the massacre in Peking's Tiananmen Square, we in the West have received many glimpses on TV of the hardships endured by Tibetans under the oppressive Chinese occupation. When the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Dalai Lama in 1989, it confirmed not only the stature of Tibet's exiled leader but also the immense imaginative power of this elusive country and its religion.

The peaks of Western attention towards Tibet include the British military expedition of 1904, the Everest expeditions of the 1920s and 1930s and then the 1959 flight into exile of the Dalai Lama. But even in between these dramatic moments, Tibet and its religion have evoked a sustained fascination for Westerners. This fascination has its own history. Every era has constructed its own fantasy but on surfaces already provided and through previously established imaginative processes.

Despite the substantial destruction of traditional Tibet by the Chinese since 1959, its religion still remains intact albeit mainly in exile. Since 1959 numerous monastic communities in exile have sprung up both in India and Nepal, as well as in most countries of the Western world. However, Tibetan Buddhism did not arrive two decades ago into a vacuum: there was already a well-prepared place for it. Layer upon layer of discourses on Buddhism had been laid down in the Western imagination over many centuries (Fields, 1981; Dumoulin, 1981; Welbon, 1968). In the East, Buddhism had been spread primarily through pilgrims and the medium of royal courts, whereas in the West it arrived carried by explorers, imperial administrators, travellers, mystics, fringe dwellers and outsiders, occultists, philosophers, anthropologists

and artists. The Orient and the East are rich with Western fantasies. Names of real countries such as Siam, Ceylon, Tibet are mixed with the mythic landscapes of Shangrila, Shambhala and of 'lost horizons'. Such geographical reveries colour Western fantasies about Buddhism (Hilton, 1947; Said, 1979).

Tibet's location at the frontier of the Western sphere of influence and at the fringe of its everyday concerns, has been directly responsible for the consistently rich fantasies evoked by that country. In a sense, Tibet's peripheral place has given permission for the West to use it as an imaginative escape: a sort of time out, a relaxation of rigid rational censorship. Time and again Tibet has been described with all the qualities of a dream, a collective hallucination. As with dreams, issues that are central to everyday life emerge symbolically in a strikingly, unashamed, naïvety.

The West has steadily increased its knowledge of Tibetan religion over the course of nearly four hundred years. 'Here is what I learnt of the Tibetan Religion', wrote Father Ippolito Desideri in 1716, 'They call God Konciok; and they appear to have some notion of the Holy Trinity . . . They use a kind of chaplet, over which they repeat these words: Om, ha, hum' (Markham, 1971, p. 305). Desideri was just one of a line of intrepid Catholic missionaries who struggled to reach Lhasa from the seventeenth century onwards. Their response was mixed, especially towards the more esoteric or tantric aspects of Tibetan religion. One of the first to record these, Horace Della Penna in 1730 exclaimed: 'The other part of the thirty-six volumes of the law Khiute gives precepts for practising magic, and other foul matters of luxury and lust . . . I have not read this infamous and filthy law . . . so as not to stain my mind' (Markham, 1971, p. 338). Images of sexuality, violence, beastiality, power and magic abound in these texts and continue to colour the West's vision of Tibetan religion. It is therefore not surprising to find reference to it, albeit tongue-in-cheek, in the midst of 'Twin Peaks' darkly violent sexual broodings and struggles for power.

Even a superficial encounter with Tibetan Buddhism brings one into contact with a dazzling visual display of imaginative beings, ranging from Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Saints, to demons and creatures from the Hell-Realms. As with so much about Tibetan Buddhism, these images convey both literal and symbolic, exoteric and esoteric, truths. The very richness of Tibetan religious life invites a plurality of fantasies. As the eminent French Tibetologist Stein writes (1972, p. 164):

There can be no question of giving even the most incomplete overall account. It is a whole world, immensely complex, embracing many aspects: a rich and subtle philosophy, with its own dialectics and metaphysics; a very advanced depth-psychology linked to techniques of meditation and the control of psycho-physiological functions (yoga); an enormous pantheon; countless rituals; popular practices; cosmological speculations; systems of divination.

In fact, the Tibetan language contained no word for Buddhism. Tibetans, traditionally, did not think of themselves as Buddhists (Stein, 1972, p. 192; Kvaerne, 1972, p. 22). The West, with its systematic accounts, has played a significant role in the invention of Buddh-*ism,* as opposed to the religion practised by those who follow the teachings of the Buddha, and whose beliefs and rituals merge indefinably into their local folk customs.[2]

The question at the centre of this study is what happens when a complex symbolic system such as Tibetan Buddhism is selectively removed from its original cultural setting and then relocated, no matter how carefully, in the midst of another, entirely different, context. Tibetan spiritual ideas are now enclosed within a religious and social structure consisting of exiled Tibetan monks, newly ordained Western monks and nuns, and an assorted array of non-monastic lay practitioners. Such communities can be found all over the Western world. The first was founded in the 1960s at Eskdalemuir in Scotland. Subsequently communities have been established in French châteaux and Parisian suburbs, in a Cumberland priory and a London warehouse, in desolate Australian scrub or in city suburbs, as well as in a variety of locations in the USA (Fields, 1981; Oliver, 1979).

Western Buddhist practitioners are located at the intersection of a complex set of historical, social and psychological discourses. Their attitude towards the religious or symbolic world, indeed their whole symbolic literacy, has been shaped by their encounter with a previous religion—usually Christianity. The attitude of such practitioners towards Christianity is not only the result of personal religious experiences but undoubtedly encompasses their whole childhood and family world. In addition, the place of religion and the Christian Church within the history of Western civilization form an intimate part of the conscious values and attitudes of these new Buddhist practitioners. To say that many of those involved with Tibetan Buddhism in the West are dissatisfied

with Western civilization, its history and its religions, is surely an understatement.

Contemporary Western interest in Tibetan Buddhism has largely focused upon its advanced and sophisticated religious practices: the development of spiritual, occult and parapsychological powers; the breadth and subtlety of its philosophical and psychological reflections; the complex details of meditation and yoga; and the intricate symbolism of its immense pantheon of divine and semi-divine beings.

However, this is not an account of Tibetan Buddhism in the sense of expounding upon its spiritual and philosophical mysteries, but a study of the Western imagination as revealed in the encounter with an Eastern spiritual system: the way the West has responded to Tibetan Buddhism; the images it has summoned; the practices it has encouraged. What have Tibet and its religion meant to the West and what part have they played in the coherence of Western fantasies?[3]

C. G. Jung was one of the first to seriously consider the problems associated with the Western use of Eastern spiritual practices. Furthermore, he articulated this critique from the *inside,* having himself a deep psychological respect for both Eastern spirituality and Western culture. Also, his questions were constantly directed towards concerns of the imagination and as such his work is an essential starting-point. Yet, as we shall see, Jung's pioneering work too can be located within the historical context of Western fantasies about Tibet.

There are two seemingly opposed perspectives in dynamic psychology's study of religion. On the one hand lies Freud's seminal text, *The Future of an Illusion,* in which religion is taken as a sickness of the mind, an avoidance of psychoanalytic truth, an escape from the demands of reality. On the other lies Jung's *Symbols of Transformation,* in which religious symbolism is treated not as an avoidance, but as a confirmation of psychological reality and as a path to some kind of religious resolution. Both texts have subsequently become founding studies for two radically divergent traditions in the psychology of religion. While owing much to both of these perspectives, this study differs by considering religion as a source and statement of imagination, less a route to transcendence than a way of soul- or fantasy-making. James Hillman has clearly articulated the concerns of such an approach (1978, p. 127):

Depth psychology has applied its method to the study of alchemy, myth, religious dogma and ritual, scientific theory, primitive behav-

iour, cosmologies, psychiatric ideas . . . all in terms of the archetypal
fantasy therein contained and expressed . . .

The variety of interpretations evoked by Tibetan Buddhism is a
testimony to its richness as a religion. But this abundance also
allows us insight into the nature of the depth imagination. Studies
in the phenomenology of the imagination continually emphasize
its paradoxical nature, the tension between shadow and light, the
crucial place of contradictions. Without these qualities imaginative
perception quickly congeals into literalism; an erotic playfulness
becomes crushed by the burden of so-called facts; a deepening
movement replaced by the demand for a transcendental truth. As
we follow the unfolding story of the West's encounter with Tibetan
Buddhism, time and again we can sense the loss of imaginative
insight, the failure of reflection. In particular, there seems to be
a refusal to bear with any contradiction or to acknowledge the
shadow-side of the encounter.

So much has been written about the spiritual value of Tibetan
Buddhism, that I see this book as something of a corrective to such
one-sidedness. In particular I am concerned with the neglected or
ignored *underside* both of the religious system and of the fantasies
which have reconstructed it in the West. Tibetan Buddhism has a
great capacity to engage with the darkness and the depths of the
psyche as even the briefest glimpse of its place in Tibet will show.
But somehow this essential, dark connection is frequently absent
in the West. All too often it is ignored, avoided, or just not seen.
Yet, Tibetan Buddhism must be in contact with the pathologies
of the West if it is to have any real effect.

Any spiritual or psychological tradition can be considered to
have four aspects: its ideas (including theories and experiences);
its practices (which include its rituals, how it engages with ideas,
emotions, intuitions and sensations, its codes, and the pragmatics
of how it goes about making moves in image-work); its tradition
(that is, the historical and contemporary conversations within
which it imagines and inserts itself); its organization within a
particular psychosocial context (how it is embodied and where it
is placed in the world). Both Freudian and Jungian psychology
have produced some invaluable reflections on the first aspect of
many religions, namely their ideas. But there is a singular lack of
reflection on the other three aspects. The following chapters show
how these four dimensions weave themselves into each other, mu-
tually confirming and concealing the assumptions, paradoxes,
root-metaphors and contradictions.

Throughout this study I have shown that Tibetan Buddhism is deeply involved in Western problems with the symbolic Father. This does not always reveal itself directly and frequently it is only by glancing into concerns about order, structure, continuity and authority that this root-metaphor is uncovered. Time and again the Western imagination seems paralysed, paradox by-passed, tensions and contradictions avoided, in the face of a benign and omniscient Father image.

It is commonly insisted that this higher spiritual knowledge needs to be 'teased apart from its cultural trappings and domesticated' (Anderson, 1980, p. 12). However, we do not have to correct the social and political misuse of Tibetan Buddhism, nor purge it of its apparently extraneous social trappings, even if we could. I am not so sure that we can somehow *fillet* out social discourse and neatly separate it from some fantasy about the pure *essence* of the teachings. My prime aim has been to show how Tibetan Buddhism, as a symbol, has become literalized and concretized. To de-literalize is to embrace the paradoxical, even the shadow and underside of Tibetan Buddhism. It is to begin to see deeper into the apparent density of things, and to liberate the imagination. Social concern is itself mythic and encourages an erotic response. A full and critical comprehension of the social implications of fantasy material, including religious systems, is a vital aspect of imaginative work. If we omit such social reflections on Tibetan Buddhism we isolate both it and ourselves from the wider context of the social world. Through social ponderings— angry, empathetic, concerned—the system becomes more porous, and more surfaces are discovered on which the imagination can be reflected. Through such a process, the spiritual system is drawn back into the contemporary social milieu. It becomes alive and relevant. The following chapters trace many of the West's images of Tibetan Buddhism in an attempt to reconnect insight with paradox, assertion with reflection:

Chapter 2: *TIBET DISCOVERED* focuses upon the history of the formation of the Western fantasy of Tibet and its religions, especially against the background of the Victorian and post-Victorian era. It outlines the contours of the almost mythic landscape of Tibet.

Chapter 3: *EASTERN RELIGION: WESTERN IMAGINATION* is an extended discussion of the use and misuse of Eastern ideas in the West. It establishes a framework for a reflective, imaginative

approach to East–West studies and particularly draws upon the formative work of C. G. Jung in this area.

Chapter 4: *THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE DEAD: A GUIDE-BOOK TO WESTERN FANTASY* locates this book as one of the most important Eastern texts to have influenced the West. This chapter situates interpretations of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* within both Western ideas on reincarnation and the Tibetan system of lineages of reincarnated teachers.

Chapter 5: *SPIRITUAL SCIENCE, SACRED TECHNOLOGY* analyses the use of science and technology as metaphors in East–West studies. It critically reflects on the attempts to synthesize Eastern religion and Western science. The reduction of Tibetan Buddhism into a series of spiritual techniques for use by psychotherapy or science is questioned and the root-metaphors involved in such a process are discussed.

Chapter 6: *THE NEW MONASTICISM* examines the structure of Tibetan Buddhism in its Western form—its organization, dynamics, contradictions and so on. By viewing it against the background of organized religion in Tibet, some estimation is made of the highly selective transportation of the Tibetan system into the West. Images of the Guru–student relationship are looked at in depth.

Chapter 7: *SPIRITUAL TRANSMISSION* is a detailed analysis of a Tibetan meditational icon, the Karma-Kargyud-pa Lineage Tree. The images associated with spiritual transmission are closely examined. All of the themes discussed in the previous chapters come together, as the psychological and social implications of Tibetan Buddhism in the West are discussed.

Chapter 8: *TIBETAN BUDDHISM: AN ARCHETYPAL AP-PRAISAL* concludes the book by discussing the overall archetypal significance of this religion both in Tibet and in the West. It looks carefully at the relationship between Tibetan Buddhism and depth psychology, emphasizing their similarities and their differences.

2—Tibet Discovered

'Second Thibet, or Lhata-yul, is two months journey in
length . . . It is mountainous, sterile, and altogether horrible'—
Father Ippolito Desideri, 1716

(de Filippi, 1937, pp. 77–8)

For over three hundred years a strange assortment of Europeans
have made their way across the Himalayas, the Karakorams, and
other mountain ranges which form the formidable boundaries of
Tibet. These journeys began hesitatingly in the seventeenth cen-
tury with the Portuguese Jesuit Antonio d'Andrade. This almost
forgotten visit was followed by that of the Jesuits Johann Gruber
and Albert d'Orville from whom the first information on the capi-
tal Lhasa reached Europe. In the eighteenth century more Chris-
tian monks reached Tibet—the Jesuits Ippolito Desideri and
Manuel Freyre, and the Capuchin Francesco Orazio della Penna
who in fact translated the classic Tibetan text by Tson-Kha-pa,
the *Lam-rim cheno-mo*, which systematizes the entire Buddhist
teachings of Tibet. Britain's Bogle and Turner visited Tibet and
established a firm connection with the Panchen Lama towards the
close of the eighteenth century. They travelled on behalf of War-
ren Hastings and the British East India Company. Drawing upon
this groundwork, European and particularly British interest in
Tibet gained momentum throughout the nineteenth century and
continued right into the twentieth.[1]

The nineteenth century is a chronicle of desperate attempts to
enter Tibet and to reach Lhasa, attempts which scarcely dimin-
ished in intensity during the twentieth century. These included
explorers such as the Russian Prejevalsky who crossed the worst
deserts in the world—the Takla Makan and Gobi—and who jour-
neyed through a terrible civil war, and across unimaginable bleak
mountains, in an effort to reach Lhasa only to be turned back
near the border (Prejevalsky, 1876; Rayfield, 1976). Few Euro-

peans had seen Lhasa. The strange, isolated and eccentric Englishman Manning had somehow reached the city in 1811, probably because of his idiosyncrasies and his complete lack of interest in Lhasa or even in Tibet (Markham, 1971; Woodcock, 1971). It would be over ninety years before another Englishman followed.

In 1846 the French Lazarist priests Huc and Gabet stayed briefly in Lhasa (Huc, 1850). These two, together with Manning, were the sole Europeans to visit this isolated capital during the whole of the nineteenth century. But this was certainly not through lack of trying. The Russian Prejevalsky, for example, set out across Siberia in 1879 with twenty-three camels loaded with two and a half hundredweight of sugar, forty pounds of dried fruit, a crate of brandy and a crate of sherry. His party was armed with a formidable arsenal of rifles, revolvers, a hundredweight of powder, nine thousand rounds of ammunition and four hundred-weight of lead shot. His 'gifts for the natives' included tinted pictures of Russian actresses. An additional present was some wild strawberry jam which Prejevalsky had bottled personally for the Dalai Lama. He boasted that if necessary he would bribe or shoot his way to Lhasa, but to no avail (Rayfield, 1976, p. 115).

In 1898 the Swede Sven Hedin, after preparations which included cold baths and naked plunges into snowdrifts to toughen himself, determined to make a dash into Tibet (Allen, 1982, p. 194; Hedlin, 1926). Disguising himself as a Siberian lama he hoped that by travelling fast on horseback he would outpace any news about him and hence reach Lhasa before he could be stopped. He got within two-days ride of his goal before being turned back. The solitary approach had also been unsuccessfully made earlier in 1892 by the Englishwoman Annie Taylor. She had struggled for four and a half months through a Tibetan winter before being turned back (Carey, 1983; Miller, 1976). Disguise was commonly used in attempting to enter Tibet—William L. Moorcroft and Hyder Jung Hearsey were among the first to use it successfully, in 1812 (Allen, 1982, p. 81). Alexandra David-Neel was probably among the last when in 1923 at the age of fifty-six, she walked two thousand miles from China to Lhasa disguised as a Tibetan beggar (David-Neel, 1927; Miller, 1976). The last years of the nineteenth century saw many desperate failures—the American Rockhill, the Frenchmen Grenard and Dutreuil de Rhins (who was killed), the English couple—Mr and Mrs Littledale—and the sad case of Dr. Susie Rijnhart who lost both her small son and her husband, yet still failed to reach Lhasa.

The most notable non-Europeans to enter Tibet were the pundits. These were Indians trained in survey work, who carried compasses fixed to the top of their walking staves, notes hidden inside their prayer wheels and who used beads on the rosary to count their paces and hence to measure the vast distances (Allen, 1982; Heasy, 1968). The first pundits, Nain Singh and Mani Singh, set out in 1864. The last of these Indians to reach Lhasa as a clandestine British agent was Sarat Chandra Das in 1882 and terrible punishments were dealt to those Tibetans who had befriended him. His exploits were made famous by Kipling in his novel *Kim*. The other famous non-European to reach Lhasa in these years at the turn of the century was the Japanese monk Kawaguchi, who in fact stayed in Tibet for three years, disguised as a Chinese priest (Kawaguchi, 1979).

Finally in 1904 the mystically inclined Francis Younghusband fought his way to Lhasa as the political officer at the head of a column of several thousand soldiers, porters, yaks, bullocks, sheep and ponies (Younghusband, 1910; Felming, 1961; Mehra, 1968).

This single-minded and intense fascination with Tibet sustained itself for nearly two hundred years through a great span of Western social changes—from the dawning of the Victorian era right through to the present.

Travellers and the Study of Religion

Philosophers have achieved remarkable results in the comprehension of Tibetan religious text; anthropologists have examined kinship, ritual and monastic organization; psychologists have contributed to our understanding of Tibetan symbolic systems; art historians have given us detailed iconographic studies from the immense canvas of Tibetan sacred art. What have travellers and explorers contributed to our understanding and appreciation of Tibetan religions? In addition to sacred texts, art, ritual, and symbolic systems, there still remains untouched the feel of a religious culture, its 'tone' and the sense of *place* associated with it. Accounts of travel and exploration have contributed to this sense of *place,* to the *genius loci* of Tibet. Over the past two hundred years, Tibet has been transformed from a vague and unknown geographical site into a definite *place* in the landscape of Western imaginings. Tibet as an image gradually grew throughout the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from virtual anonymity into one of substance and complexity. Tibet and its

religion are inseparable in Western fantasies. Tibetan Buddhism is therefore not an abstract system but has a place within the imaginative terrain of the West.

Travel Writing and the Creation of Landscape

Travel, like pilgrimage, has its special landscapes, sacred places, sacred routes and its literature of guidebooks and individual accounts often written in a confessional style. Travel accounts, too, tell of hopes and frustrations, days of boredom and days of despair. But one of the great problems with travel-writing is that the imaginative aspect of place and landscape is frequently lost. In the search for the 'authentic' Tibet or the 'real' Tibetans, it is forgotten that travel does not so much discover worlds as *create* them.

As a genre, travel-writing is something of a hybrid. It has been connected with autobiographies, eyewitness accounts and travelogues. They have been called a sub-species of memoir, a form of romance (either quest, picaresque or pastoral), a vehicle for essays (ethical or scientific) or a variant of the comic novel (Fussell, 1980).

Travel-writing is the art of the collage: newspaper clippings, public notices, letters, official documents, diary extracts, essays on current affairs, art or architecture, comic dialogues, and homilies are somehow clustered together to form a coherent and satisfying whole. The internal coherence of these assorted collages of essays, sermons, and so on, relies extensively on the image of geography and landscape.

But this geographical coherence seems to encourage too literal a reading of travel accounts. All too frequently they are read as descriptions of the objective physical world, because the journey can be followed on maps, located in definite towns and geographical regions; because specific exotic food is eaten, customs observed, crazy weather endured; and because timetables are precisely stated, and names of ships and hotels clearly recorded. Instead, they are psychological statements, a part of the play of the imagination.

Travel accounts form one of the most personal documents that a large group of otherwise anonymous individuals will ever make public. They are therefore unique statements of an era's fantasy-making.

Places and Sacred Geography

A *place* is not an objective thing. A location only becomes a *place* when it is filled with subjective meanings. So Tibet as a place is not simply located 'out there' in some remote corner of the objective physical and geographical world, but also lies within the imagination of the traveller. Places relate to memories and to the heart, their contours are shaped as much by fantasies and stories as by careful observation and knowledge. Heidegger conceived a place to be where mortals, gods, earth and sky could gather and where we mortals could dwell poetically on earth (1975). Aristotle connected place with the image of a vessel. This should not be thought of as merely a passive container. A place provides its own boundaries, because it evokes a fascination—it is an affair of the heart (Casey, 1982; Tuan, 1972; Bachelard, 1969). Tibet became a landscape to which Western, soulful imaginings were drawn and which has sustained a deep fascination over the centuries. It has been said that to be without a relationship to a place is to be in spiritual exile (Relph, 1976; Samuels, 1978; Jung, *CW* 10, paras. 49–103).

In religious studies this intense sense of place has been investigated under the broad heading of sacred landscape and sacred place (Eliade, 1959; Fickler, 1962; Tuan, 1972). Sacred space has been defined in terms of its separation from the profane world, by the limited access accorded to it, and also by a sense of dread and fascination, order and power, ambiguity and paradox associated with it. Sacred places also seem to be located at the periphery of the social world. As we shall see, in so far as the West is concerned, Tibet easily fits such a description.

The relation between humanity and nature has frequently been viewed as implicitly spiritual (Isaac, 1965; Deffontaines, 1953; Barbour, 1972). Ideas such as humanity's place in the Great Chain of Being, or later, in an evolutionary schema, are theological as well as scientific. The ideas of John Ruskin, for example, spanned the most formative years of Britain's imaginings on Tibet and his influence was seminal. He wrote that the essence of a landscape lay beyond science and that landscapes had a deep symbolic meaning. To comprehend this essence, one needed to *see* rather than just to observe, to develop a full engagement of self with the landscape. For Ruskin, beauty and God were almost synonymous, and the most sublime beauty lay in mountain landscapes. His vision has been called a 'theocentric aesthetic' (Cosgrove, 1979).

But ideas on landscape did not just support and influence the

experiences of travellers in Tibet. These experiences, in their turn fed back and subtly modified the underlying attitudes towards landscape. Sometimes such an interaction is clear and direct. For example, Ruskin's ideas of beauty and the heart of landscape were carried on by Francis Younghusband when he was president of the Royal Geographical Society. Younghusband recounted how, after the treaty with Tibet had been signed at the Potala in Lhasa, after all the struggles, fighting, bloodshed, frustrations and diplomacy of the previous months, he 'went off alone to the mountainside'. He wrote: 'The scenery was in sympathy with my feeling . . . I was insensibly suffused with an almost intoxicating sense of elation and good-will . . . Never again could I think evil, or again be at enmity with any man . . . Such experiences are only too rare', he continued, 'Yet it is these few fleeting moments which are reality'. He concluded: 'that single hour on leaving Lhasa was worth all the rest of a lifetime' (Younghusband, 1910, pp. 325–7).

The geographer Vaughan Cornish heard the middle-aged Younghusband lecture in 1920 and was profoundly influenced by his ideas on the beauty and transcendental power of landscape (Gilbert, 1972, pp. 227–56). Cornish went on to firmly establish a geo-poetic perspective within cultural geography and is well known for his pioneering effort in creating national parks and wilderness areas. There is a quality in the attention currently given to the wilderness which contains elements of a religious attachment. Many use such parks as sanctuaries, as places for reverie and for a kind of prayer (Graber, 1976). It is interesting to muse how that single mystic moment of Younghusband's in Tibet is echoed distantly in the national parks scattered around the Western world.

The creation of the place, of the landscape of Tibet, therefore did not occur in a vacuum. Even in the eighteenth century Britain was involved in ruminations about the 'East', and about its religions and customs. British culture also contained definite conceptions of geography, landscape, the picturesque, the sublime, the beautiful and the good. These values made up the imaginative context from which Tibet, as a clear object of fascination, arose.

Tibetan Religion as a Geographical Fantasy

Professor Huston Smith in his classic 1974 film on Tibetan Buddhism—*Requiem for a Faith*—commented that 'Tibet is more than a land, it is a religion'. He continued by saying that Tibet 'is a land

so close to the sky that the natural inclination of her people is to pray'. This beautiful image should not blind us to the relationship between religion and landscape which is being expressed. At first it seems to be such an obvious connection as to be somehow an empirical fact. But this is not the case. It is part of the play of the imagination. To associate prayer, altitude and sky in such a way reveals much about the image of sacred places in the Judaeo-Christian tradition and in the imaginative milieu of the West in the second half of the twentieth century. Above all, such a connection between geography and religion has been a consistent theme in Western fantasies about Tibetan Buddhism. For example, Christmas Humphreys in his very popular study on Buddhism, wrote:

> The physical conditions of Tibet lend themselves to religious thinking. The great spaces, the height of the mountain ranges which surround them, the rarified air in a land which is largely over 16,000 feet, these and the silence where men are scarce and wild life is rarer still, all lend themselves to introverted thought . . . (1974, p. 189)

Another example comes from Sir Charles Bell, the influential commentator on Tibet in the early years of this century and a close friend of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama:

> Buddhism, of the type that has been formed in Tibet and Mongolia, flourishes characteristically in their great expanses. The dry, cold pure air stimulates the intellect but isolation deprives the Tibetan of subjects with which to feed his brain. So his mind turns inward and spends itself on religious contemplation, helped still further by the monotony of the life and the awe-inspiring scale on which Nature works. (1931)

A specific fantasy of spiritual experience reoccurs in these geographical ruminations: religion as an introverted, solitary and rarified activity.

Many Tibets

It would, of course, be quite wrong to reduce all of the images of Tibet into a single pattern. While there was a similar overall shape to most of the fantasies about Tibet, there also existed contradictions, tensions and paradoxes. In fact there have been *many* Tibets in the Western imagination, although they all grew from the same

three imaginative contexts: imperialism, exploration and mysticism.

Imperialism exerted its influence throughout the formative years of Western involvement with Tibet. It included concern about imperial rivalry, a sense of imperial destiny, the desire to consolidate empire through exploring, mapping and surveying, plus worries about diplomacy and trade. Exploration, which found one of its fullest flowerings in the nineteenth century, also dominated the Western relationship to Tibet. Under the heading of exploration can be included adventurers and mountaineers, as well as scholars in the fields of geography, archaeology, ethnology and the psychical and natural sciences. The empires and their frontiers were a spur to investigation. This was a period when explorers, archaeologists and ethnographers were often greeted with enthusiastic acclaim both by the public and by scientific bodies (Hunter, 1896; Allen, 1982, p. 187; Rayfield, 1976, pp. 15, 41, 85). The East in general has also long exerted a fascination for many Western mystics. This mystical imagination has formed a continuous thread in the West's relationship with Tibet.

Tibet as a Sacred Place: Upwards

The position of Tibet, atop the world's highest mountains, has been its single most important characteristic as an imaginative landscape.

It is well known that mountains have been viewed widely as an *axis mundi*, as the dwelling place of gods, as the meeting place between humans and gods (Eliade, 1959, pp. 38–9). The territory around the mountain is held by many to be the highest country in a spiritual sense too. But traditionally these high places have been the dwelling place of both benevolent *and* malevolent supernatural beings. Hence humanity has long held an ambivalent attitude to such lofty regions. Beginning in the eighteenth century, this ambivalence towards mountains began to undergo a profound change, particularly in the British imagination. Earlier Western commentators had often referred to mountains as blemishes, or even as warts, upon the surface of the globe. But from the romantic viewpoint and under the impact of the discovery of the Alps by Rousseau, Saussure, Wordsworth, Ruskin and others, mountains became unequivocally associated with a sense of the sublime and the beautiful (Nicolson, 1959).

If the Alps were the inspiration for mountain mysticism then

the Himalayas gradually became its cathedral. However, it was not until quite late in the nineteenth century that the Himalayas managed to rival the grip which the supposedly more picturesque Alps had over the British imagination. In 1861 we find Samuel Bourne, the first British photographer to work in the Himalayas, determinedly hunting down 'picturesque views' and constantly comparing them to the supposedly 'superior' ones of the Alps (Bourne, 1864; 1869–1870). Even in Younghusband's account at the turn of the twentieth century, there are still moments of ambivalence. He referred to the 'nightmare of the mountains'. Tibet was also a landscape of heaviness and weariness. Many nineteenth-century travellers groaned beneath the burden of its immense plains incessantly swept by bitter winds, or the interminable chaos of the Himalayas, the labyrinth without a plan and without logical coherence.

The Himalayas came into their own as the love of the 'wild picturesque' became supplemented in the twentieth century by the increasingly widespread love of 'the wilderness'. From that moment on, scarcely any trace of ambivalence is to be found in travel accounts. In one of the most recent ones, that by Peter Matthiesson, this unequivocal worship of the highest mountain peaks reaches a new intensity. For him the Himalayas are directly associated with sublime feelings of pure insight, with the peak of spiritual wisdom and knowledge. They are almost direct proof that impermanence and death can be transcended. The use of the Himalayas by the Victorians for character building and self-*improvement*, has become accentuated into the twentieth-century *search* for the Self (Lester, 1983). Matthiesson writes that up in the mountain is 'clean air', 'the absence of sound', 'warmth and harmony' and 'whispers of a paradisical age'. Matthiesson comments that he wishes to 'penetrate the secrets of the mountains' (1980, pp. 16, 26, 121–2). The titles of many earlier accounts intimate his sentiments: viz. *The Throne of the Gods*, and *Himalayas—Abode of Light* (Heim and Gansser, 1939; Pallis, 1946; Roerich, 1947).

We may well ask, what has happened to the ambivalence, to the interplay between the forces of light and darkness which characterized the traditional attitude towards mountains? Where is the darkness of the sacred landscape? It is all too white, too silent, too pure, too rarified on the mountain peaks. There is too much light. Often in these accounts, such darkness is left down below, in the valleys. So, Maraini wrote:

The valleys down below are hot and wet, full of a voracious, imperious or cunning, aggressive or insinuating vitality. Up here we are in a realm of ice and clarity, of ultimate and primordial purity . . . Down below night is even more alive than day . . . But up here the night is nothing but light and space . . . Time and matter seem no longer to exist. Hence here death immediately suggests eternity. Down below death is decomposition, a minor, unimportant phase in the cycle of living . . . Up here night has the solemn, crystalline dignity of the great truths; it is mind, God. (1952, p. 46)

More recently, Matthiesson described valleys as grim, full of decay, degeneration, corruption, impermanence, ignorance and confusion (1980, pp. 26, 121–2). It reaches such an intensity that even the inhabitants of the valley are contaminated by their environment. Matthiesson compares the 'friendly and playful children' of the mountains with the 'grim Hindu children of the towns' and valleys. He dreads the return of 'lowland life' (1980, pp. 16, 21, 29, 271). Such a bias towards the people of the hills as against those of the plains has a long history in the Western imagination (Greenberger, 1969, p. 133). Often such a bias reveals itself when hill-people are consistently described as independent, individual, open and honest. The women of the mountains are portrayed time and again as laughing, self-confident and assertive, while the men are portrayed in terms of 'manliness' and self-sufficiency. Even the inward-sloping walls of Tibetan architecture have consistently provoked admiration from male Western travellers. Maraini perhaps spoke for many when he wrote that these sloping walls suggested 'a man standing with his legs apart, firmly planted on rock or on the ground. It is a courageous and noble architecture . . .' (1952, p. 191). These are of course qualities which have long appealed to Western fantasies. In Victorian times, it was notions of virility and independence which were bestowed upon these mountain people, whereas now it is an all-pervading mystic harmony. The Tibetans, living on the *highest* mountains, become increasingly reified as we move from the nineteenth century to the present day.

In addition to being imagined as *axis mundi*, as conduits to the gods, mountains are also related to images of overview, of control and protection. Tibet has often been called the 'roof' of the world—offering protection from the gods. Blavatsky and other early theosophists imagined Himalayan Masters, the Mahatmas, as influencing and even controlling the spiritual destiny of humanity from their commanding heights (Ryan, 1975). Prejavalsky imag-

ined Lhasa as the Rome of Asia, set high up and spreading its influence, control and power, like a net, over 250 million people from Ceylon to Japan (Rayfield, 1976). I recently came across a 1950s children's novel in which Hitler escaped from Germany into Tibet with a band of SS troops, and set up a battery of missiles armed with atomic warheads. From these unassailable heights he could rain terror on the rest of the world down below—he was defeated at the last moment (Duff, 1950).

Darwinian evolution uses the metaphor of the ascent/descent of humanity. Occultists in the nineteenth century were quick to use this image in terms of spiritual evolution. The masters in Tibet were often viewed as the peak, the culmination of spiritual evolution.[2]

Source

Tibet has frequently been presented as the source of all the great rivers of southern Asia, which fall from this highest country in the world (Hedin, 1898, vol. 1, pp. 4–5). Rivers are rich symbols— holy, life-giving, even metaphors for life itself, and the four greatest rivers in India have their origins in Tibet. The search for these sources occupied explorers and geographers for over one hundred years (Allen, 1982). Even though this quest was overshadowed in the popular imagination by the search for the source of the Nile, the nineteenth century seemed obsessed with the fantasy of the source of *all* great rivers.

The nineteenth century was also concerned with other images of origins or sources. The Hungarian Csoma de Körös, the first European to systematically study Tibetan language, arrived in western Tibet about 1825. He was determined to find the origin of the Hungarian race and language, and was en route for Mongolia just north of Tibet (Duka, 1885). This search by Csoma de Körös was also echoed in the concern with locating the origins of the Aryan race. The Himalayas and the regions of Central Asia just north of Tibet were all caught up in this search (Childe, 1926). The early twentieth century sociologist Max Weber emphasized that the conversion of the Mongolian nomads to Buddhism by the Tibetans was an event of world importance. He wrote that it finally put an end to the 'ancient source of all "folk migrations" . . .' (Weber, 1967, p. 285).

Tibet has frequently been viewed as a *source* of spiritual and occult wisdom. Blavatsky, David-Neel, Evans-Wentz and Govinda

obviously lean in this direction due to their overwhelming spiritual concern. But such a sentiment is to be found throughout the literature of travel and exploration. Tibet has been called a storehouse of spiritual wisdom, a vast library, a tradition in deep freeze (Anderson, 1980, pp. 5, 274–9, 286–7, 305, 308; Pallis, 1946, pp. 395–8). In Tibet, it has been argued, was preserved a kind of original religion, more pure, more essential, more in touch with the living source of all religious feelings than any other, the last living part of the original mystery traditions of the world (Hunter, 1896, pp. 262–5; Pallis, 1946, pp. 395–8; Maraini, 1952, p. 75; Govinda, 1969, p. 13).

Prejevalsky on his 1879 Tibetan expedition discovered the 'original horse' in the remoteness of Mongolian Central Asia. It was a species which had flourished in the Pleistocene period and which survived unchanged. He had discovered one of the wild strains from which our modern horse is a degenerate descendant in terms of toughness and fierceness (Rayfield, 1976, p. 116). Here was the answer to the riddle of the famous ponies of Genghis Khan and the Mongol armies. The Mongols obtained their mounts by domesticating half-castes of these wild horses. They were the original, the archetypal source of vigour and life energy uncorrupted by civilization. What a powerful metaphor for the horse-worshipping Victorians!

Frontiers

Heidegger wrote that 'a boundary is not that at which something stops but . . . is that from which something *begins* . . .' (Casey, 1982, p. 18). Maraini wrote of Tibet's 'hungry horizon' (1952, p. 183). The boundary, the frontier, the horizon. For a considerable portion of the last two centuries Tibet defined hundreds of miles of the northern frontier of the Indian empire. For the British in India, Tibet was above all a frontier question. But the northern frontier, with Tibet and Afghanistan, was never a merely administrative affair. This frontier was always a place for the imagination. Lord Curzon, the flamboyant Viceroy of India who masterminded the expeditionary force into Tibet, gave a lecture in 1906 entitled *Frontiers*. In it he spoke of the fascination with boundaries, the romance of frontiers, the kind of literature inspired by them, the type of 'manhood' fostered by them, even the effect upon national character of being engaged in expansionist frontier struggles. The expansion and struggles in the American West and its pivotal

place in forming American culture was viewed by Curzon as being parallel to Britain's frontier struggles particularly to the north of India (1908, pp. 55–7).

In addition to being places where something begins, frontiers are also essential to a fantasy of *completion*. Empires have boundaries which are well marked, well established and firmly defended. Curzon warned that the Roman Empire collapsed because it could not maintain its boundaries. He wrote of 'silent men in clubs tracing lines upon unknown areas'. The frontier of empire marks the boundary between the known and the unknown. Frontiers, Curzon wrote, were 'the razor's edge'. Tibet was inextricably caught up in this frontier imagination. It was imbued with a mixture of both the romance of the unknown and the defence of the known. Britain wanted Tibet to remain static, unchanging, a buffer zone between them and the aggressively expansionist Russian empire (Lamb, 1960).

Protection is just one frontier activity; another is crossing them. Generations of Westerners were consumed by this fantasy. Tibet seemed to be a hermetically-sealed vessel enclosed by vast walls of ice and stone, surrounded by inhospitable, freezing deserts. The mountains encircling Tibet were called 'bastions' and 'ramparts'. Within its frontiers lay mystery.

Eliade wrote of the spiritual *chaos* of unknown and unoccupied land. By occupying it, it is symbolically transformed into a cosmos, into a part of 'our world' (1959, p. 31). Over the centuries Tibet has been increasingly occupied not just physically, by explorers, soldiers so on, but by the Western imagination.

For many explorers the crossing of the high passes over the mountain frontier of Tibet was like entering a new world (Tucci, 1967, p. 15; Byron, 1933; Chandler, 1931, pp. 28, 82). Tibet's frontiers were equivalent to the boundary of a *temenos*, a sacred place. Within such a space, time and history are suspended. Again and again we read of Westerners commenting that Tibet was a society in deep freeze, left on the shelf, a museum. Rarely was any interest shown in Tibetan history, but mainly in its mythology, its reincarnations, its supposedly unchanging tradition.[3] Such a static, fixed and isolated view of Tibet is a gross exaggeration. Tibet has a colourful history. Its institutions are not immemorial. It was the Western imagination which needed an unchanging Tibet, outside time and history.[4] How nicely this mystical fantasy dovetailed with imperial demands.

Fascination

The idea of *place* does not simply consist of spacial vectors—origins, upwards, downwards, boundaries—it also involves the heart. In the case of Tibet, this heart-connection primarily manifested itself in terms of *fascination*. This is a very specific form of eros. Conquest, colonization, destruction or taming had virtually no place in the West's relationship with Tibet.

Marco Pallis had only to catch a glimpse of Tibet from afar, for it to summon up an intense yearning which eclipsed even that felt for the mountains:

> But there was something else which . . . drew our gaze even more than that icy spire. To the left of it, through a distant gap in the mountains, we could just make out lines of rolling purple hills, that seemed to belong to another world, a world of austere calm . . . It was a corner of Tibet. My eyes rested on it with an intensity of longing . . . Tibet is well guarded, as it should be. (1946, p. 138)

It is as if Pallis is a Dante catching a glimpse of his beloved Beatrice—the hem of her dress, or perhaps a shoe. Similarly, while Matthiesson never actually reaches Tibet, its presence, just above and beyond his immediate horizon, nourishes and sustains his fantasies. Tibet is like an enchanted place to Matthiesson which lures him ever deeper into the mountains. Indeed, Tibet is Pallis's Beatrice. It is his anima, a symbol of his soul. This is a different quality to the youthful longing expressed whilst gazing out over unknown horizons, or to the intense desire for spiritual authority and order. Both of these as we have seen, have their place in the imaginings on Tibet. But fascination is primarily concerned with appearances, with the *display* of the landscape, of the art, the architecture, the colours and the light.

The language of travel accounts is revealing. It has been observed, for example, that in Robert Byron's book on Tibet, words like 'strange', 'odd,' 'uncanny', 'outlandish', 'astonishing' and 'unnatural' occur far more than in any of his other travel accounts (Fussell, 1980, p. 92). The titles of Tibetan travel accounts abound with such words: *Tibet the Mysterious* (Holdich, 1906); *In the Forbidden Land* (Landor, 1898); *Forbidden Journey* (Maillart, 1937); *Secret Tibet* (Maraini, 1952); *Lost World* (de Riencourt, 1951); *Secrets of Tibet* (Tucci and Ghersi, 1935); *Lhasa and its Mysteries* (Waddell, 1905). Maraini describes the Tibetan mountain landscape as 'a beautiful, temperamental woman' (1952, p. 183).

For much of this era of Tibetan exploration, Western culture has been highly patriarchal. Travel and exploration, despite the exploits of a number of women, was a man's world. Prejevalsky was only the most extreme example with his refusal to allow women to enter his home or to take any Cossack with him who had ever been married. This world emphasized all the characteristics considered to be desirable in a man. The unconscious of this age could be seen not only in the consulting rooms of Vienna and Zurich but also, strongly, in its geographical fantasies. After Lhasa had finally been reached by a European, in the form of Younghusband and his British troops in 1904, the Viceroy of India wrote apologetically to the explorer Sven Hedin: 'I am almost ashamed of having destroyed the virginity of the bride to whom you aspired, viz. Lhasa' (Allen, 1982, p. 201). For Hedin it was sufficient reason to make him lose 'the longing that had possessed . . . [him] to penetrate the Holy City . . .' (Allen, 1982, p. 202). Younghusband's entry into Lhasa, the unknown, the fascinating, the holy, the untouched city, has been referred to as rape. An account written at the time of the Younghusband expedition had the title *The Unveiling of Lhasa* (Chandler, 1905). Being the first to enter Lhasa was an obsession with many of the explorers.

The Legitimacy of the Traveller

The idea of *place* therefore includes the psychological attitude of the traveller, the particular route or style of travel adopted and above all the type of person who travels. For example, in the nineteenth century, definite notions existed as to whom, how and under what circumstances a journey to Lhasa was valid. Women, non-Europeans, lower classes, amateurs, eccentrics, mystics and younger people have all been dismissed at some time, in one way or another. The most obvious was the restriction placed on women for most of this period, and the silencing or trivilization of many who actually *did* manage to make the journey (Middleton, 1982; Miller, 1976).

Other semi-invisible travellers into Tibet were the Indian pundits mentioned above. While one of the pundits, Nain Singh, was awarded a gold medal by the Royal Geographical Society after reaching Lhasa, these non-Europeans did not really count. They were faithful surrogates for the British (Montgomerie, 1869; 1875). Basically, one had to be European to count in the quest for Lhasa. Even Prejevalsky's Cossacks received scant recognition. To

be descended from the aristocracy, or at least to be an officer and a gentleman, was essential. Accounts of Himalayan exploration up until quite recently were descriptions of the world of the ruling class—the silence of the solitudes was frequently disturbed by the rattle of medals, titles, ranks and honours.

The one British traveller who did manage to reach Lhasa between 1800 and 1904, namely Manning in 1811, was ignored at the time and received little acknowledgement later. He was too odd to be taken seriously. Also, he did not write anything public about his experiences. Worst of all, he insisted on going native and dressing in Chinese and Tibetan clothes (Markham, 1971).

Prejevalsky sneered at amateurs and virtually dismissed the French Lazarist priests, Huc and Gabet who reached Lhasa in 1846. Mystics have always been viewed with suspicion and a recent author discounts Alexandra David-Neel's 'magical fantasy', Blavatsky's 'thaumaturgical' accounts and those others who paint a picture of 'chimerical marvels'. He favours a down-to-earth, rational view, which he claims is 'nearer to the Tibetans' (Woodcock, 1971, pp. 21–2). Younghusband, writing of his remarkable solo journey as a 26-year-old in 1887 from Peking to India, commented that 'in those staid days youth received scant attention. Because such a journey was made by a young man, it could not be of much importance' (Younghusband, 1937, pp. xi–xii).

The Underworld of Tibetan Travel

Prior to the First World War, there was never any suggestion that Tibet as a cultural entity was in danger. Tibet was a secure and unquestioned place in Western imaginings. Consequently the West felt free to express ambivalence about many aspects of Tibet in addition to its mountains and deserts.

In Tibet the British encountered an almost Kafkaesque parody of their own formidable imperial bureaucracy. The Tibetan government appeared to have all the negative characteristics of bureaucracy—indescribably slow to operate, an unwillingness to make big decisions at regional level, an obscurity so profound that ignorance and timidity seemed to be the essential qualifications for belonging to it. There was an underworld of vicious punishments for those who either disobeyed rigid orders, or who inadvertently showed individual initiative. Corruption seemed rampant and a total ignorance of international diplomacy existed. Younghusband could not decide whether the bureaucrats were

evil or just stupid. In the British imagination, the imperial admin-
istration of India was one of the wonders of the world. It had its
faults, but by comparison with the sinister machinations of Tibet,
it was exemplary. It was almost as if Britain was faced with the
shadow of its own bureaucratic imagination (Younghusband,
1910; Chandler, 1905, p. 207).

Lamas and priests in their role as Church or political adminis-
trators were generally viewed with distaste. Their position seemed
dictatorial, almost totalitarian in its fusion of political power and
absolute spiritual control. The situation was referred to as one of
'spiritual terrorism' (Hunter, 1896, p. 252). Lamas were called
'frauds', 'incarnations of vice and corruption' (Kawaguchi, 1979,
p. 422). To an era in which individual democratic freedom was
increasingly becoming an exemplary idea, if not a practice, Ti-
betan Lamaist power was anathema. Many commentators were
quick to distinguish between these bureaucratic monks and the
ordinary people, for whom the feelings tended to be warm. A
distinction was also made between the Lamaist organization and
the religion of Buddhism itself (Rayfield, 1976, p. 138; Chandler,
1905, p. 146).

The general attitude among travellers towards Buddhism dur-
ing this period varied enormously. Some, like Prejevalsky, detested
it. For him it was a 'pretext to idleness, a religion that sapped
vitality and hindered progress' (Rayfield, 1976, pp. 48–49, 162).
'The mindless discipline, the untidiness and the filth of the lamas'
community' was what he noticed, not the high level of scholarship
achieved by a small élite. Most travellers seemed to have had re-
spect for Buddhism but commented negatively on the Tibetan
version and the superstition of the general population (Hunter,
1896, pp. 251–4; Chandler, 1905, p. 106). Some were even
touched by moments of sublime admiration for the spirituality of
the Tibetans (Younghusband, 1910).

Explorers represented the extreme vanguard of an extroverted,
aggressive, expansionist culture which valued, above all else,
involvement in the world, individuality, earnestness and will. To
this cultural ideal of manliness, the extreme introversion and
world denial of hermits, recluses, siddhas and lamas was seen
as a form of madness. The idea of someone voluntarily walling
themselves up in a cave for life exceeded the muscular imagina-
tion of the British travellers. It was a strange encounter when a
culture which valued extroversion met a culture which was exactly
its opposite—one for whom heroes were solitary recluses.

Prior to the First World War, we also encounter an ambivalence

towards East–West relations. For a number of travellers, such as Prejevalsky, the West was rapidly becoming degenerate and the solitudes of Central Asia offered an escape (Rayfield, 1976, pp. 49–50, 187). But he certainly did not imagine that the East would spiritually save the West. Hodgson even wrote about the West's role in regenerating a sick and faded, but nevertheless ancient civilization such as India (Hunter, 1896, p. 320).

From the 1920s onward, a sense of doom appears on the horizon of travel accounts about Tibet and a profound shift occurred in the West's imaginative relationship to Tibet. Suddenly it seemed as if Tibet was in danger and needed protection. In 1939 Marco Pallis was desperate as he emphasized the undermining influence of Western things and ideas. He wrote: 'There is little room to turn: one ill-judged movement may cause a fall to the bottom. This is Tibet's danger . . .' (1946, p. 422).

As the confidence in Tibet's future became eroded, we find that the general attitude towards the culture loses its ambivalence. This gradual loss of ambivalence towards Tibetan culture by the West, throughout the years of the twentieth century, bears a striking parallel to the transformation of Western imaginings on the Himalayan mountains. As viewing the peaks became an unequivocal, sublime and aesthetic experience, so the Tibetan culture became an exemplary model of that ancient tradition now lost to the West.

By the 1950s, the shift in imaginings on Tibet became even more pronounced. The proverbial dirt, filth and mess which looms so large in earlier accounts, and which is tolerated or ignored in subsequent ones, almost becomes a virtue in some accounts. We read little of the harsh forms of punishment. The Kafkaesque theocratic government with its obscure Lamaist bureaucracy is actually considered to be an exemplary organization. André Migot, for example, argued in 1955 that Tibet ranked as 'one of the best-governed countries in the world' (1960, p. 104).

In these subsequent accounts, Tibet, the culture, the religion and even the people rarely throw any shadows. Pallis calls Tibetans 'some of the happiest on the face of the earth' (1946, pp. 255–8). Matthiesson, writing in the 1970s, imbues all of his Sherpas (with their close relationship to Tibet) with a selflessness and with 'the wise calm of monks'. He reassures us that in his destination of Inner Dolpo, the people are of 'pure Tibetan stock' (1980, pp. 10, 177). Generalization about the Tibetans abound in most accounts of this period. There is a surfeit of happy, serene, laughing Tibetans. One almost longs for the infamous bandits which infested so much of Tibet to come galloping over the horizon. From Pallis to

Migot, we are also assured that there is no rivalry between the various Buddhist sects, although Pallis does admit that occasionally there are broken skulls and blood is spilt! There seems to be an extraordinary attempt to squeeze the material into a constricting imaginative mould. Tibetans become exemplary creatures whereas in earlier accounts they were still complex and human. There is a sense of desperation about the fantasies of Tibet in this post-war period. The dominant question was not how to protect traditional Tibet, but rather how much time was left to it. The landscape of Tibet became a geography of hope and despair.

It is significant that although the first European report of the yeti, the abominable snowman, was in 1832 and the first sighting of apparent yeti tracks was in 1889, it was not until the 1930s that this story began to deeply affect the Western imagination. The previous lack of sightings, or even of any real interest, is curious given the popularity of the Himalayas with experienced big-game hunters. Can we suppose that the yeti, the primitive human ape, emerged in the 1930's to step into the shadow left vacant by the Tibetans who were becoming increasingly spiritualized in Western travel literature? (Napier, 1976)

The exile of the Tibetan tradition in the late 1950s was also our exile. As they descended from their mountain fastness, there were many Westerners who followed them into an exile from their fantasy landscape.

Tibet as a Sacred Site

Tibet has frequently been referred to as a utopia, a Shangri-la, a lost horizon. It has a place in the fantasy of the West's spiritual regeneration by the East. It was a nascent anima image in the West's discovery of the unconscious. Tibet has also often been used by Westerners as a touchstone in their struggle to assert new ideas. For example, Robert Byron in the 1930s saw in the colour and bold forms of Tibetan architecture an ally in his war against the domination of classical aesthetics; from Fanny Bullock Workman to Arlene Blum, women have seen climbing the mountains surrounding Tibet as important in the struggle against patriarchy (the practice of polyandry and the relatively high social status of Tibetan women has sometimes been invoked in this debate); Marco Pallis saw in Tibet the battle between tradition and progress; Angorika Govinda similarly saw the struggle in the 1950s

between the Communist Chinese and the Buddhist Tibetans in epic proportions:

> As on a gigantically raised stage we witness the struggle between two worlds . . . either the struggle between the past and the future . . . or as the struggle between spiritual freedom and material power, between the dignity of the human individual and the herd-instinct of the mass . . . (Govinda, 1976, pp. xi–xiii)

Tibet and the Himalayas were also a part of the nineteenth-century search for an imaginative coherence, a plan. Hodgson wrote in 1849: 'I have been for several years a traveller in the Himalayas, before I could get rid of that tyranny of the senses which so strongly impresses all beholders of this stupendous scenery with the conviction that the mighty maze is quite without a plan' (Hunter, 1896, p. 286–7). Max Muller subsequently praised Hodgson for producing a 'rational grammar' of the mountain chaos. Hodgson applied the same energy to classifying the 'babel' of the hill tribes and fitting them into a schema of cultural evolution. The nineteenth century seemed obsessed with 'blank spots' on the map, with finding 'missing links' in terms of geography, zoology, ethnology, religions and so on (Bower, 1976, p. 1; Allen, 1982, pp. 68, 140–9). A world was wanted in which everything fitted and had its place. These images of mapping, of missing links, of blank spots dominated the imagination of the era and the plan seemed to be constantly in danger of being overwhelmed by the plentitude of new discoveries.

Above all, Tibet was a vital link in the West's imaginative connection with memoria, with the past, with the ancients. It provided continuity with archaic tradition. It was associated with the gothic and medieval fantasies that were popular in the nineteenth century. Then it became part of the Egyptian and Atlantean fantasies of the twentieth century. Tibet has consistently been treated as the museum of a fantasized past. It has served as a landmark from which the West has struggled to achieve a sense of its own identity.

3—Eastern Religion: Western Imagination

'. . . we have really learned something from the East when we understand that the psyche contains riches enough without having to be primed from outside . . .'
(C. G. Jung, 'On the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation,' *CW11*, para. 773)

Edmund Chandler, the *Daily Mail*'s correspondent on the British 1904 expedition into Tibet, wryly remarked that 'Orientals have a way of talking platitudes as if they were epigrams' (1905, pp. 121, 206). He seemed to be genuinely perplexed about Eastern wisdom. Was it profound or was it naïve? Did it come from mysterious depths or from murky shallows? Was Tibetan religion the summit of mystical excellence or just degenerate superstition? Chandler was not alone in his bewilderment at how to interpret the seductions of Eastern ideas. About the same time as Chandler, one outraged and frustrated author wrote in his book *The Mystic East:* 'Men are men and their powers are the same whether in China or Cheswick, Tibet or Tooting!' Between the extremes of unquestioned acceptance and outright rejection, ecstatic embrace and cool dismissal, the East has succeeded in evoking a profusion of fantasies. These fantasies are in themselves a most important aspect of the Western encounter with Tibet. In the rush to either affirm or deny the claims of Tibetan mysticism, to plunder it for therapeutic techniques, or to correlate it with contemporary science, few have stopped to reflect seriously on what it all means.

East–West studies have generally focused upon questions such as the nature of Eastern wisdom, the parallels between Eastern and Western philosophy, or how Eastern ideas can be used in the West as a series of advanced therapeutic techniques. But there is another approach to East–West studies which focuses upon the history of how the East has been imagined and interpreted by the

West, and what the East means to the West. This approach asks such questions as: under what conditions were the various Eastern cultures encountered by the West, and what was the operating table, the ground of meaning, the mythic or imaginative substratum which supported the East–West interchange and upon which concepts and ideas were moved around? Such a perspective views the cross-cultural interchange as resting upon an ocean of symbols (Baudet, 1965; Said, 1979; Campbell, 1973, vols. 2 and 3).

It is frequently through extreme geographical *differences* that a culture reflects upon itself and tells stories about itself. The gradual emergence of the image of Christian Europe, for example, depended extensively upon the development of fantasies about an Islamic Orient. Fantasies of Tartary, of the East, of the West, and of Asia only acquired a coherent shape quite recently. They were formed within the context of the West's struggle for self-definition. Tibet is also a part of the oppositional fantasy between East and West which dominates contemporary imaginings. Indeed, there is a density about the image of East–West which is difficult to shift. Hopefully, by addressing it directly, at its root-metaphor—geography—the previous chapter has created some imaginative space.

Plucking a highly evolved religious and philosophical system such as Vajrayāna Buddhism from its sociocultural milieu is fraught with difficulties. As Peter Marin wrote of some experiences with Tibetan Buddhism in America: 'We drift in a landscape that we do not understand and we have the wrong names for things' (1979, p. 43). Jung was one of the first to set about unravelling the psychosocial complexities of this interchange. As such, his work is an essential starting-point for any imaginative analysis.

All of Jung's major writing on Buddhism, and on Eastern religion generally, were undertaken between 1936 and 1944, with the exception of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* which appeared in 1929. He produced the work on 'Mandala Symbolism' in 1950 and subsequently reconsidered his commentaries on two Tibetan texts in 1953. His visit to India took place between 1938 and 1939. It is important to situate these works in the development of Jung's opus. The earlier phase which led to his co-operation with Freud ended in 1912, with the publication of 'Symbols of Transformation'. This work with its concentration on the archetypes of Hero, Puer and Great Mother, not only sealed his split from Freud, it also plunged Jung into a period of isolation and introspection which ended in 1921 with the publication of 'Psychological Types'.

From 1921 to 1936 Jung was attempting to find objective parallels to the processes he had discovered both in his own inner explorations and in those of his patients and colleagues. Gnosticism and then *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (an alchemical and Taoist text) provided him with such models. In 1936, when his first works on Buddhism appeared, Jung was already sixty-one years old. His ideas had been maturing over the past twenty-four years but had not yet found their way to the alchemical framework which dominated his work in the last twenty-five years of his life. Jung's studies in Eastern religion marked a fundamental turning-point in the development of his ideas. In this period Jung took a decisive step into the use of imaginative discourse as an analytical tool.

When looking at Jung's references to Eastern religion, four reoccurring themes stand out. He was concerned with the practical problems for a Westerner using Eastern spiritual methods and philosophy. Also, images of wholeness, of a goal, or of an organizing principle of healing, became central to his thinking. The mandala and the Buddha were such images which drew his attention. Practical insights into the *meaning* of meditational, and active-imagining experiences occur in Jung's work of this period. Finally, under the name synchronicity, Jung began to investigate a-causal reality. This included the nature of imaginative language and the use of symbols in healing and spiritual transformation.

According to Jung, we have to read Eastern texts in the light of their context. He insisted upon a psychocultural analysis of the context from which any spiritual practice or philosophy is drawn and saw four major problems with the indiscriminate mimicry of Buddhism and other Eastern religions.

A) READING EASTERN TEXTS

Jung puzzled over the extensive psychological systems of Indian and Tibetan religious thought and their concommitant lack of the systematic study of external reality. He saw this as being in marked contrast to the West's extensive scientific and technological studies and the relative absence of psychological investigation. He realized that these concerns reflected the valuation of inner and outer reality in the two cultures. Jung considered that the West was over-concerned with an extroverted attitude and the East with an introverted one. He viewed both attitudes as being one-sided:

> . . . In the East the inner man has always had such a firm hold on the outer man that the world had no chance of tearing him away from

his inner roots; in the West, the outer man gained the ascendancy to such an extent that he was alienated from his innermost being. (*CW* 11, para. 785)

Jung was not reducing these two great cultures to 'nothing but' extroversion or introversion. He was simply trying to indentify the dominant psychological attitude out of which knowledge arose. Jung maintained that when a Westerner (with a dominant extroverted tone) approaches an Eastern psychological/spiritual text (with its dominant introverted tone) he or she should entirely *reverse* the instructions. So, in the case of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* Jung suggested that it traditionally represented the initiation process moving from the highest and most exhalted state of pure mind to the lowest, which is rebirth in the womb and the movement into the world. However, in the West psychology as an initiation system works in the reverse order. It begins with incarnate life in the world and 'regresses' back to the earliest childhood and the birth trauma and thence to intra-womb and intra-uterine experience. Such psychological experiences prior to the moment of conception are beginning to be tentatively explored in transpersonal psychology as the introverted undercurrent begins to reassert itself in the West (*CW* 11, paras. 842–55; Grof, 1976).

Jung also turned his attention towards Kundalini Yoga, and his conclusions could apply equally to certain forms of Tibetan Yoga. The traditional path of awakening is from the lowest to the highest. In Kundalini this is expressed as moving upwards from the lowest chakra, the Mūlādhāra, which is located near the genitals. This chakra indicates the state from which we begin, our taken-for-granted world. But, as Jung pointed out, in the West 'we do not go up into the unconscious we go down'. He continued: 'In adapting the system to ourselves, we must realize where we stand before we can assimilate such a thing. In the East the unconscious is above . . . so we can reverse the whole thing . . .' (1975, p. 12; *CW* 11, para. 875). In the West we begin in the external world and have to undertake a 'Nekyia', a descent into interior reality. Jung claimed that with the East it is an opposite movement.

B) THE QUESTION OF FANTASY CONTENT

In his commentary on 'The Secret of the Golden Flower', Jung drew attention to the injunction in this work to reject all fantasy content. This, he wrote, appeals to the pragmatic scientific West-

ern mind. But the Eastern dictum is not addressed to this rational extroverted mind with its relative poverty and ignorance of fantasy. Jung insisted that in the East there is so much awareness of mythic reality that 'protection is required against the excess of fantasy. We, on the other hand, look upon fantasy as valueless, subjective day-dreaming' (*CW* 13, para. 63). He continued:

> The East can reject these fantasies because long ago it extracted their essence and condensed it in profound teachings. But we have never even experienced these fantasies . . . The East came to its knowledge of inner things in relative ignorance of the external world. We, on the other hand, will investigate the psyche and its depths supported by a tremendously extensive historical and scientific knowledge.

Jung warned that any Western interpretation of other knowledge-systems must take cognizance of the conditioned one-sidedness from which we view the world. Failure to do this could lead either to non-comprehension and a feeling of cultural superiority or to a naïve and unreflective acceptance.

c) AVOIDANCE OF THE SHADOW

As early as 1929, Jung wrote, 'I am in principle against the uncritical appropriation of yoga practices by Europeans because I know only too well that they hope to avoid their own dark corners' (*CW* 11, para. 939). I think this is a similar sentiment to that which led certain Buddhist teachers, such as Chogyam Trungpa, to radically change their style when they came to the West. Hence the title of one of his books, *Cutting through Spiritual Materialism* (1976). This book is aimed at precisely the same misuse of spiritual techniques that Jung was warning about over fifty years ago. James Hillman has recently continued this critique:

> In the East the spirit is rooted in the thick yellow loam of richly pathologised imagery—demons, monsters, grotesque goddesses, tortures and obscenities . . . But once uprooted and imported to the West it arrives debrided of its imaginal ground, dirt-free and smelling of sandalwood! (1977, p. 67)

This could be called export-quality mysticism.

My experiences with Tibetan Buddhism in the West have certainly borne out Jung's concerns. I have consistently encountered a bewilderment and sometimes a hostility whenever Tibetan Buddhism is mentioned in tones which are less than sacrosanct. In

numerous conversations, I have found that many cannot accept the fact that Tibetan Monastic Buddhism evolved alongside political power struggles and violence.[1] Even if these are grudgingly conceded, then it is quickly pointed out that this is not the *real* Buddhism. However, Christianity does not receive the same *laissez-faire* treatment. Christianity and its shadow side are generally associated together, even if lip-service is given to the equality of all religions. This may seem to be a harsh generalization but I have encountered it so often, in so many countries, that it does seem consistent. A veneer of spiritual tolerance can easily become established. Ironically the image of Tibetan Buddhism as being *tolerant* can become incorporated into the belief in its superiority.

The problem from the imaginative point of view is that the avoidance of the shadow removes paradox. Imaginative cognition can become paralysed beneath Eastern religion's pure persona in the West.

D) THE THIN VENEER

Jung considered that the cultural soul of the West has been largely untouched by Christianity. He wrote of the '. . . unconscious and undeveloped psyche which is as pagan and archaic as ever . . . . a psychic condition that has remained archaic and has not been even remotely touched by Christianity . . .' (*CW* 12, paras. 12–13). In Jung's imaginative reconstruction of history, the West is fundamentally a half-savage culture covered by a thin layer of Oriental religious civilization:

> Only a little more than a thousand years ago we stumbled out of the crudest beginnings of polytheism into a highly developed Oriental religion which lifted the imaginative minds of half-savages to a height that in no way corresponded to their spiritual development. (*CW* 13, paras. 70–1).

In other words, the 'primitive' culture of the West was transformed from the outside and not by an organic evolution from within. Christianity, that one-time Oriental religion, attempted to lift the psyche of our ancestors and utilized methods that were often brutal. In actuality the depths remained largely untouched. However, instead of recognizing this untouched primitivity, Westerners ignored and repressed it (*CW* 12, paras. 12–13). Jung surely had in mind the religious persecutions, witch burnings, religious wars, world wars, together with the iniquities of colonial-

ism and imperialism. We could also add to this list the disregard for ecology and human rights.

This concern of Jung's was not so much one of the shadow or the repressed as it was of the untouched cultural soul. He wrote '. . . how thin is the wall that separates us from pagan times' (*CW* 9ii, paras. 270–2). These unrecognized elements of the psyche, untouched by Oriental Christianity, 'naturally did not develop, but went on vegetating in their original barbarism' (*CW* 13, paras. 70–1).

In a sense, Jung was pointing to an *earlier* importation of Eastern, or Oriental, religion and to its consequences. The West has always been vulnerable to Eastern religion. In addition to Christianity, Jung cited the earlier, Roman, adoption of Mithraic religion, which was also initially an Eastern cult. Once again, '. . . while we are turning the material world of the East upside down with our technical proficiency, the East with its superior psychic proficiency is throwing our spiritual world into confusion' (*CW* 10, paras. 179–94). For Jung, the lesson was quite clear. Westerners have repeatedly adopted or copied Eastern religion. We have been attracted to its sublime and lofty conclusions: 'We would like to scale the heights of a philosophical religion, but in fact are incapable of it' (*CW* 13, paras. 70–1).

The danger is that the depths of the psyche remain untouched. Jung stressed that unless the instinctual, or unconscious mind is given a respect equal to that given to the conscious mind, then the repressed will return with a vengeance. This explains why depth psychology moves towards the instinctual and the pathological in human experience. Jung saw psychopathological symptoms—hysteria, schizophrenia, depression and so on—as the psyche crying out and trying to articulate its demands. Western attraction to the religions of the East, or paganism, or shamanism, or theosophy were also viewed by Jung as responses to the psyche. But according to him this response should be seen only as a first stumbling step towards illumination. These 'other' traditions should be read psychologically, insighted mythologically and not *adopted* philosophically nor in terms of their techniques. They are signs pointing to deeper rumblings in the psyche and do not constitute imported answers: '. . . Christianity must indeed begin again from the very beginning if it is to meet its high educative task' (*CW* 12, paras. 12–13).

The Limitations of Jung's Approach

Jung has given some invaluable ground rules by which to trace the movements of West–East imaginings. We can usefully build on these bold beginnings. It is clear, however, that Jung did not fully appreciate Buddhist meditation. He tended to see meditative concentration and absorption (samādhi) as an unconscious state. For Jung if there was not an object of consciousness, there could be no consciousness (Jones, 1979). Jung made sweeping statements about meditation without recognizing their variety. For example, he primarily saw Buddhist meditation as wholly dependent on the individual—this is the 'self power' of Zen. But Jung largely ignored the idea of 'other-power', found in Japanese Shin Buddhism (Bishop, 1989*b*). Jung also gave the unconscious a rather negative tone when he discussed meditation. He saw meditation as primarily a one-sided attempt to withdraw from the world (*CW* 11, para. 774). He saw it as a surrender to the collective unconscious, an introverted journey into self-absorption.

Jung's somewhat fearful and apocalyptic warning, that the fashion for Eastern ideas could divert Western civilization from its root problems, would be shared by few these days. His tone was that of the far-sighted Wise Old Man, whose dire prophecies inevitably go unheeded. When he adopts such a stance, the rich fantasies being evoked by Eastern philosophies tend to be ignored. It must also be remembered that these commentaries on Tibetan Buddhism did not belong to Jung's most mature work with its greater subtlety of imaginative, archetypal analysis.

We are nearly fifty years on from the time that Jung sketched out these ideas. Tibetan Buddhism is now in exile. Its teachers and techniques are easily accessible to interested Westerners. Tibet is no longer a land of mystery but a land of loss. Its mountain frontiers, the Himalayas, have ceased to be the awesome preserve of the privileged few and are daily becoming the playground of popular adventure tourism. A profusion of sacred texts, commentaries, and techniques are available on a scale undreamt of fifty years ago. A new generation of scholars has emerged, fully proficient in the Tibetan language and, in many cases, directly under the meditational and intellectual guidance of Tibetan lamas. The interested Westerner now has easy access to a considerable body of well-translated material. Tibetan lamas have also become more familiar with the Western milieu and some have changed their teaching styles accordingly. Monastic and quasi-monastic communities of dedicated students have sprung up in the West. Finally,

all of this has occurred within a profusion of Eastern ideas: yoga, meditation and martial arts are no longer considered strange; Eastern-influenced healing, therapies, and diets repeatedly touch the surfaces of everyday life in the West. Western imperialism in its more overt and confident form has been replaced by a West that is guilt-ridden, fearful of the future, in retreat.

Tibetan Buddhism as an Archetypal Fantasy

Jung wrote that 'projections change the world into the replica of one's unknown face' (*CW* 9ii, paras. 13–19). What exactly does this face, which we see gazing back at us from the mirror of Tibetan Buddhism, look like?

The West's specific interests in Tibetan Buddhism have changed markedly over the past 150 years. In the second half of the nineteenth century, those who cast their imaginations towards the East looked for those ideas that were *similar* to their own. Questions of faith, ethics, morality and rationality come to the fore time and again in the works of this period. The West in the twentieth century is more estranged from its own religious traditions than its Victorian forebearers and has looked into Tibetan Buddhism for guidance, for the *different,* for the unusual. So, in the twentieth century, the West has tended to focus upon Tibetan Buddhism's claims of occult powers, meditational feats and reincarnational systems.

Many have seen only the simplicity and the firmness of Tibetan faith; others only the superstitions and narrow hypocrisies. To the Protestant–Anglican British of the nineteenth century, Tibetan monasticism reeked of popery, but by the twentieth century it had become an exemplary model of scholarly organization and spiritual guidance. From Blavatsky at the close of the nineteenth century to Alexandra David-Neel and Marco Pallis in the 1930s, and Govinda in the 1950s, Tibetan Buddhism has been imagined as the guardian of those essential qualities *lacking* in Western spirituality. It seems to provide continuity with archaic spiritual authority, knowledge and technique.

The Symbolic Father

What are the root-metaphors of these extensive fantasies about Tibetan Buddhism? As we have seen, in the era when Tibet was

still firmly a geographical fantasy, in the days before exile, it evoked youthful longings and frontier fantasies: heroism and obsessive seduction played side by side. But around its *religion* there has persistently hovered a very specific series of images. These present, on the one hand, the face of order, authority and continuity. On the other hand, the West has apparently seen spiritual tyranny, oppressive hierarchy and corrupt power. From the fantasy of Lhasa as the Asiatic Rome to that of Tibetan Masters guiding the spiritual destiny of the world from their commanding heights, it is the face of the Father (or Senex)—the Holy or Wise Old Man, the Elder and the Autocrat, that consistently appears in the Western imagination.[2] The longings for superior knowledge, for assurance, for what is ordered, old and established, for a continuity with learned traditions and hierarchical disciplines are all pre-eminently senex values. Even in Jung's work on Tibetan Buddhism, the superior psychological wisdom of the Tibetan patriarchs is emphasized. The mandala in Jung's imagination became a symbol of wholeness, unity, order, coherence; a stable and abstract cosmic system that expresses so well the monotheistic fantasies of the senex imagination.[3]

We can recall Antonin Artaud's appeal, over fifty years ago, to the Dalai Lama for help, guidance and instruction:

> O Grand Lama, give us, grace with your illuminations in a language our contaminated European minds can understand, and if need be, transform our Mind, create for us a mind turned entirely toward those perfect summits . . . Teach us, O Lama . . . how we may no longer be earthbound. (1972, p. 64)

Artaud's desperate pleading for a benevolent, but all-powerful patriarch, echoes the unconscious anguish of many. The twentieth century has witnessed a *malaise* deep within the heart of established values. Repeated wars, recessions, and ecological disregard have combined with cynicism and corruption to undermine senex morality and guidance. There has been a massive turning-away from orthodox patriarchal values, whether religious, scientific or social, because of their own default, ineffectuality and tyranny.[4]

In the 1950s Govinda wrote that what was important was not the survival of Tibet as a place, but the *continuity* of its spiritual tradition (1969, p. xii). Tibet as Shangri-la, as a lost horizon, as a geographical seductress, has receeded far into the background. A politically confident Victorian Britain, with patriarchal values in the ascendence, poured scorn on the Tibetan senex—its bureauc-

racy, monasticism, scholasticism, judiciary and military organiza-
tion. By the 1950s such confidence had been utterly eroded and
Tibetan systems were considered by many to be exemplary. Blavat-
sky's isolated surrender in the nineteenth century to the omnipo-
tence of Tibetan masters has since become accentuated into a
widespread doctrine. Many in the West now seem to be stuck
between either a promiscuity of beliefs or else a desire to totally
rely on the authority of one. The capacity for imaginative dis-
crimination seems to have been lost.

The problem is that only one half of the fantasy is being em-
braced: either the good or the bad Father. In fact, as I discuss
below, Tibetan Buddhism itself encourages such a one-sided proc-
ess. It has even been argued that a fundamental split between the
good and bad Father is a central and distinguishing characteristic
of the Tibetan symbolic world (Paul, 1982). In this symbolic world,
there is an idealized vision of succession and continuity based on
Fathers and Sons, on spirit and consciousness, entirely independ-
ent of kinship relations, of blood and community.[5] So too, the
monastic system with its obsessions about rank and hierarchical
order, plus its ruthless determination to sustain and perpetuate
itself, speaks strongly of senex values.

Many writers have pointed to this devouring, castrating aspect
of senex fantasy. Neumann, for example, shows that it can operate
in two ways. Either it can encourage a total dependence on its
superior spiritual wisdom, its hoard of ancient knowledge, hence
negating the individual's meagre and hesitant imaginative in-
sights; or else the individual can become swollen with spirit, in-
flated with an impersonal wisdom far beyond his or her own
experience (Neumann, 1970, pp. 186–90). Hillman similarly
warns about the power of such spiritual systems:

> When accentuated it seems to have drawn all power to itself, paralys-
> ing elsewhere, and a person is unable to take a decision without first
> taking counsel . . . , to await an advising voice . . . [But] statements of
> sagacity and meaning, even spiritual truth, can be bad advice. These
> [cultural] representations—elders, mentors, analysts, and old wise
> men—provide an authority and wisdom that is beyond the experience
> of the dreamer, 'helping' to keep him helplessly dependent.[6] (1970, p.
> 164)

The imagination is readily imprisoned within such structures.

4—THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE DEAD: A GUIDEBOOK TO WESTERN FANTASY

'May I recognise whatever visions appear, as the reflections of
mine own consciousness.'

(Evans-Wentz, 1974, p. 103)

On 12 August 1927 *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (more correctly
called *The Bardo Thödol* or The Liberation Through Hearing in
the Bardo) was published. From that day it has never lost its hold
upon the Western imagination. It has been one of the most im-
portant sacred texts of the East to have reached the West in the
twentieth century. For example, Timothy Leary and his colleagues
wrote their own version of it as a guidebook for use with psyche-
delic drugs (1971). Also, it has been of seminal importance in the
development of a new thanatology in the West: in the wake of
centuries of repression, the West is now beginning to reflect seri-
ously on the importance of dying and its place in the life-experi-
ence of the individual.[1] This Tibetan text has also been used to
circumscribe the limits of Western science, raising serious objec-
tions about its dualism, about the distinction between the observer
and what is being observed (Laing, 1982). A number of works of
art have been provoked by this remarkable text (Henry, 1963;
Lowe, 1981). It has played a significant role in the resurgence and
acceptance of Western occultism (Wilson, 1973). Finally, it has an
assured place in the development of twentieth-century Western
psychology, particularly in the work of C. G. Jung, as well as
among others concerned with research into the nature of con-
sciousness (Nin, 1976, p. 332).

What is the source of its fascination for the West? This remark-
able text has given new words to the vocabulary of Western spiritu-
ality and psychology, such as 'bardo' (the intermediate realm
between death and rebirth) and 'mandala' (an image of unity
within diversity). It opened up a whole new landscape of con-

sciousness to the West. It set an exemplary standard against which
other ancient texts dealing with the art of dying are measured
(Lauf, 1977; Evans-Wentz, 1974). Colin Wilson, for example,
writes that the deeply respected *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* is
but 'a crude farrago' by comparison with the Tibetan text (Wilson,
1973, p. 172). Jung, too, considered it far in advance of *The Egyptian Book of the Dead,* and wrote that it is of 'an unexampled sublimity' (*CW* 11, para. 833). David-Neel considered the Tibetan's
reflections on death and reincarnation to be superior even to
those made by other traditions of Buddhism (1972, pp. 23–40).

The book begins with death and the disincarnation of consciousness, with the gradual separation of mind from body. Indeed, throughout this text, death is seen as a steady, inexorable
process. It describes a ceaseless, unbroken *continuity* of consciousness that threads its way endlessly through one incarnation and
disincarnation after another. This process, of the disincarnation
of consciousness and then its subsequent reincarnation, is presented in astonishing detail, and with the unquestioned assurance
of an absolute authority. The dying process is explained in Tibetan Buddhism in terms of a gradual dissolving of the elements
of gross consciousness. Eight cycles of dissolution are outlined,
beginning with the element of 'Earth' (cohesion), which represents the crudest level of consciousness, and ending with the disappearance of the most subtle expressions of conceptuality and
duality. At that point the dying person becomes unconscious. This
is then replaced by the clear light of death, 'a state of lucid vacuity'
(Hopkins and Lati, 1981, p. 19). *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is
designed to awaken the realization of spiritual liberation and begins with the presence of this clear, basic luminosity. It holds that
this moment is the most propitious for recognizing the exact identity between the supposedly individual, subjective, experiencing
mind, and śūnyatā, emptiness, the unbounded plentitude of form-
ings and emptyings that are the nature of Absolute Reality. If this
propitious moment is refused, either from terror or ignorance,
then individual consciousness begins to descend through stages
that are the exact reverse of disincarnation, until once again it has
incarnated, not necessarily in a human form. The period between
the refusal of the clear light and the moment of reconception in
a womb is known as the bardo, the intermediary stage. The Tibetan text contains instructions for facilitating liberation through
awareness of the non-duality of mind at every stage of the bardo.
No matter what visions present themselves, the instructions insist
that these be reclaimed by the 'individual' and at the same time

recognized as being equivalent to Buddha-Nature. Immediately after the refusal of the clear light these visions are peaceful, but as one opportunity after another is refused, the visions become more and more fearsome. But even then the individual is exhorted to recognize them as being only reflections of mind, as expressions of Absolute Reality. Finally, the text contains detailed instructions on how to 'close the womb-entrance', how to refuse reincarnation, or if that fails, at least how to be ensured of a spiritually beneficial rebirth.

The text is a saga, an epic struggle between, on the one hand, the voice of omniscience that seeks to liberate, and on the other, the ignorance, confusions and fears of individual consciousness. There can be no doubt about the extraordinary psychological and spiritual power of this Tibetan text. Similarly one has to acknowledge the astuteness and integrity of people such as C. G. Jung and W. Evans-Wentz, who immediately recognized the quality of *The Bardo Thödol* and who struggled to transpose it into a Western framework. Any subsequent study of this book can only build upon the crucial insights developed by these pioneers. However, when attention shifts from a study of the intrinsic meaning of the text to its place in Western fantasy-making, then we alight on virtually untouched terrain.

An Imaginative Guidebook

When Jung agreed in 1935 to write a psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* he was engaged in a struggle on two fronts: he wanted to understand, critically and imaginatively, the fashion for Eastern ideas, and yet also warn about the dangers of the one-sidedly rational and mechanistic perspective that dominated the West. Jung once remarked that this Tibetan book was his constant companion. Recently, on his well-known trek deep into the Himalayas, to the border of Tibet, Peter Matthiesson likewise carried a copy of this sacred text (1980, pp. 89–90). Both wrote that they frequently dipped into it as if to take their bearings. It seems as if *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is a guidebook of some kind. Of course we have all heard it referred to as a 'map of consciousness', as a 'handbook of sacred technology', or as a 'manual to higher planes of reality', but that all seems too glib, too abstract, too literal. It does not explain why it should be *carried* around Zurich, or through the mountains of Nepal like a route map or a travel guide. Of course, there *is* something very neat,

very compact and portable about *The Tibetan Book of the Dead.*
It is organized in a logical, step-by-step sequence of events and
instructions. Its display of experience is impressive. Like the best
travel guides it defines routes and points out things to notice on
the way. Maraini with his usual perceptiveness and gentle humour
calls it 'a Baedeker of the world beyond' (1952, p. 172). Certainly,
The Tibetan Book of the Dead presents us with a map of the labyrinth
of death, and an itinerary instructing us how to negotiate our way
through. Like a travel book, the essential organizing thread of this
Tibetan text consists of a route and a chronological sequence. For
example, the instructions in *The Bardo Thödol* begin at the end of
the dissolution of both gross and subtle dualistic-consciousness.
We are then told that about three days will be passed in the clear
light. This will then be followed by up to seven days in the bardo,
although it also may only be a moment. If a suitable incarnation
is not found then the bardo journey will be repeated. This can
happen seven times in all making a possible total of forty-nine
days, after which a rebirth will necessarily have to occur. The
important thing here is not the precise number of days, but the
fact that 'days' are mentioned at all. It seems almost incongruous
that mundane, earthly time should have any connection whatso-
ever with after-death phenomena. But the use of exact units of
time, in a recognizable sequence, bestows the text with both order
and authority. The contemporary Tibetan teacher Chogyam
Trungpa comments that *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is in reality
a book about *space.* 'Space', he writes, 'contains birth and death;
space creates the environment in which to behave, breathe and
act, it is the fundamental environment which provides the inspira-
tion for this book' (Trungpa and Freemantle, 1975, p. 1). But *The
Tibetan Book of the Dead* is also about the *mapping* and *defining* of
space and about charting the *route* through space. In addition, as
we shall see, this book is about fantasies of power, both social and
individual, both Tibetan and Western.

There is a close connection between travellers' handbooks and
the religious imagination. Prior to the publication of John Mur-
ray's *Handbook for Travellers in Holland, Belgium, Prussia and North
Germany* in 1836, the word 'handbook' had only been applied
to manuals of ecclesiastical offices (Gilbert, 1972; Phillips, 1978).
Subsequently the label was increasingly given to small volumes
containing concise information for travellers. *The Tibetan Book of
the Dead* is indeed a handbook, but it is not just a technical manual
to esoteric Buddhist practices. It is a handbook to landscapes in
both Western and Tibetan imaginations.

The Yogi and the Yeti

Certainly its entrance onto the stage of Western fantasy-making was well timed. As was emphasized in Chapter Two, the period between the world wars was one which witnessed an erosion of confidence in the future of traditional Tibetan culture. This culture was a crucial link in the West's imaginative connection with *memoria,* with the Ancients. It was an established part of the Egyptian and Atlantian fantasies of Western Hermetism, occultism and theosophy. Indeed, even as early as 1783, we find Captain Turner, only the second traveller from Britain to enter Tibet, speculating on the continuity of Tibetan culture with that of ancient Egypt (1971, pp. 288–9). By the close of World War Two, American Indian culture had taken its place, alongside Egyptian and Atlantian, as an exemplary model of an archaic wisdom tradition. It is no surprise therefore that in this period Tibetans should be connected with the Indians of North America. One author, for example, writes: 'I was struck by the amazing resemblance between these copper-coloured Tibetans and the American Indians of Arizona or New Mexico. It is a well-known scientific theory that they belong to the same Mongol stock, one branch of which headed across the Straits of Bering down into the heart of America, while the other went southwest towards the Himalayas' (de Riencourt, 1951, p. 20). The Tibetans have subsequently been connected with other archaic peoples such as the Australian Aborigines (Elkin, 1980). Simultaneously then, with a perceived threat to this 'archaic culture', the West suddenly gained access to what seemed to be the *essence* of Tibetan wisdom. Jung, for example, wrote that *The Bardo Thödol* contains 'the quintessence of Buddhist psychological criticism' (CW11, para. 833). Moreover, it was written in a matter-of-fact style, as a series of detailed and pragmatic instructions. It burst upon the West like an operating manual of cosmic-consciousness.

The arrival of this Tibetan text also coincided with a fascination in the West about the yeti, the primitive ape-creature of the Himalayas (Napier, 1976). These two images, the Bardo Thödol and the yeti, marked the extreme polarity in Western fantasies about Tibet at that time. Tibetan culture and religion quickly lost their ambivalence in Western eyes, and became an increasingly exemplary model of all that had been lost to the 'fallen', industrialized West. This exhalted fantasy was symbolized by *The Tibetan Book of the Dead.* Meanwhile in the displaced shadows dwelt primitive snow-beings, the rejected bits of Western culture and of the West-

ern psyche. And of course there was the unredeemable evil of Communism, the hatred for which grew in intensity from the 1920s to the 1950s among Westerners sympathetic to traditional Tibet (Govinda, 1969, pp. xi–xii; Thomas, 1960; Wignall, 1957).

The publication of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* coincided with a yearning in the West for spiritual authority and guidance (Artaud, 1972, pp. 64–5; David-Neel, 1971; Pallis, 1946). Certainly the Tibetan text *speaks* with authority. Jung writes that it 'offers one an intelligible philosophy addressed to human beings rather than to gods or primitive savages' (CW 11, para. 833). But what Jung does not seem to notice is that while the book is not *addressed* to gods it does in fact *speak like* a god. The absent narrator of the text is the voice of omniscience that is itself dwelling in the clear light. The voice of the instructions is one of Absolute certainty and Absolute wisdom.

> O nobly-born, listen undistractedly. On the Second Day the pure form of water will shine as a white light . . . The aggregate of thy principle of consciousness, being in its pure form . . . will shine as a bright, radiant white light . . . Thereupon, through the power of anger, thou wilt beget fear and be startled at the dazzling white light and thou wilt wish to flee from it . . . (Evans-Wentz, 1974, p. 109)

One is told in unequivocal and exhaustive details precisely what one will see and when, how one will react and also how one should react. The instructions bind time, place, sensual experience and emotional reaction into a powerful logical coherence. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is indeed like a handbook, a Baedeker, but one written by Omniscient-Mind. Like all travel accounts, the narrative style reinforces its claims of truth (Foucault, 1980; Mitchell, 1981). It is written in the language of direct experience and in the form of a story. Also, the formulaic repetitions of phrases, so characteristic of oral literature, enhance the authority of the text.

The Science of Death

The Tibetan Book of the Dead arrived in the West at time when debate about reincarnation was gathering momentum. Ideas on reincarnation had, of course, been central to Western occultism, spiritualism, theosophy and other esoteric religion for nearly one hundred years, but the 1920s and 1930s were a time of height-

ened *scientific* interest. Jung was moved to comment about the instructions in the Tibetan book: 'They are so detailed and thoroughly adapted to the apparent changes in the dead man's condition that every serious-minded reader must ask himself whether these wise old lamas might not, after all, have caught a glimpse of the fourth dimension and twitched the veil from the greatest of life's secrets' (CW 11, para. 856). It was this close attention to experience, to apparently empirically verified details, plus the consistency and completeness of its argument, its matter-of-fact organization into sequential instructions, that gave the Tibetan text its appeal to those engaged in parapsychological research. Here at last, it seemed as if a textbook for 'the science of death' had fortuitously or miraculously appeared. The fame of the man responsible, W. Y. Evans-Wentz, was assured. In one stroke he moved from obscurity to international recognition (Winkler, 1982). Such well-respected men in their fields as C. G. Jung, Lama Anagarika Govinda and Sir John Woodroffe immediately set about interpreting and commenting on this text for the elucidation of Westerners. It was as if its elaborate details and its analytic style compelled that it be granted scientific status. In fact words like 'science', 'rational', 'methods', or else allusion to them, abound throughout the commentaries on this Tibetan text. Even the Western equivalent, the medieval *'Ars Moriendi'* (Craft of Dying) was considered to be quite inferior, and lacking the profundity of the Tibetan text (Evans-Wentz, 1974, p. xvi). We need to examine these extraordinary claims in more detail.

Many have argued that *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* can be used most effectively in the West merely by replacing the Buddhist images by Christian ones. For example, Jung wrote in his commentary, 'one is perfectly free, if one chooses, to substitute Christian symbols for the gods of the *Chönyid Bardo*' (CW 11, para. 854). In his important attempt to find a synthesis between Eastern and Western philosophies about the process of dying, J. Hicks has also suggested using the Tibetan text with Christian images substituted (1976, pp. 399–403, 414–17). Timothy Leary follows exactly the same line of reasoning when he preserves the structure of the Tibetan text but Westernizes the imagery (Leary, 1971; Evans-Wentz, 1974, p. 94 fn.).

In each case a distinction is made between the structure of the text and the individual images. In each case, the body of images is neatly filleted and the skeleton removed to be used in organizing another body of images. The structural organization is left un-

touched and unexamined. For some reason, this system, or struc-
ture, is considered to be universal, whilst the images can be
changed from one culture to another.

Why is there such a confidence in the universality, the truth, of
these Tibetan structures? Why is there, on the other hand, such
a promiscuity of content, such an irreverent swapping of gods?
The gods have always had their specific places in the order of
things. These places are integral to the god's identity. It seems as
if the gods have become rootless wanderers; placeless, and inter-
changeable; modulized. It is the particular structure which is now
inviolate, unchangeable, absolute. Our gods are no longer in
heaven but can be found in our systems.[2]

Joseph Campbell is one of the few to insist on the mythological
separateness, as well as kinship, between East and West. For exam-
ple, he suggests that the conflict between China and Tibet had
little to do with Western notions of individuality and freedom.
Campbell describes the situation in terms of a struggle between
two faces of Eastern mythology—in both cases that of the individ-
ual subordinated to a universal and superordinated law, either
karma or historical materialism. Whether he hits the mark or
not, Campbell at least draws attention to the specificity of Tibetan
mythology and its profound difference to that of the West (1973,
pp. 505–16). Campbell reminds us that the entire *structure* and
organization of symbolic imagery must be studied as an expression
of a specific cultural imagination.[3]

To understand the belief in its scientificity, we must return to
the voice of the text. Its certainty and its objectivity are almost
clinical. In fact, the text is akin to a clinical dissection of the anat-
omy of consciousness. In a masterly study of the clinical gaze,
Michel Foucault writes of its claims to purity, to truth, to being
outside any systems or theories: 'observation is logic at the level
of perceptual contents' (1973, pp. 107–9). The clinical gaze of the
Tibetan text renders its system and structure *invisible*. The system
and structure are not treated symbolically but as if they are liter-
ally true: 'All theory is always silent or vanishes at the patient's
bedside' (Foucault, 1973, p. 107). Spiritual guidance to the dying
is surely an exemplary bedside situation. The belief in such a gaze,
such a form of pure perception, only established itself in modern
times, around the beginning of the nineteenth century. It coin-
cided with the dominance of a materialist, mechanistic and ratio-
nal conception of reality as exemplified by modern medicine,
science and technology.

It is as if the Tibetan system is believed to coincide with some

fundamental arrangement or organization that exists in objective reality. In fact it *does* coincide with reality; *psychological,* archetypal reality. As such it is therefore symbolic and insists on submitting itself to psychological understanding.

Like the *I-Ching* and the Kabbalah, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is one of those spiritual books of the world that has a distinctive and unique structure. We could perhaps go further than this and say that with each of these books the structure is of equal, if not more, importance than the imagistic content. Like the Tibetan text, the structure of the Kabbala, its characteristic 'tree', has been used to organize diverse, non-Jewish imagery, including symbols from Christianity, science and hermeticism.[4] In each case, the images are treated as being culturally specific whilst the symbolism of the structure is largely ignored because it is considered universal.

Jung seemed to realize on one level that the organization and structure of this Tibetan text were important and were culturally specific. He wanted to turn these Eastern systems upside-down, inside-out, back-to-front, in order to adopt them to Western culture.[5] He saw the structure of the bardo text paralleled in the initiation rituals of the Western mystery religions. Initiation rituals are characteristically imagined as journeys, as rites of passage. But this Tibetan text is more than just an initiation ritual. During such processes one is conscious of being involved in a ritual, in a symbolic drama. In the Tibetan case, however, the fine, but important, distinction between symbolic ritual and literal reality has collapsed. The book presents itself as the voice of omniscient consciousness describing Absolute Reality. It describes itself as being, not symbolic, but analytic, not as presenting a mystery but as outlining empirical fact.

The Tibetan texts on the dying process also establish a powerful series of connections between the visible and the invisible worlds.[6] For example, with the fourth cycle of dissolution of consciousness several events are described. Breathing ceases and physical activity stops. These are directly observable phenomena. At the same time we are told that the element of wind is being dissolved and that on the inner plane the individual sees images of a sputtering butter-lamp or a candle about to go out. The rationality of this connection is one of similitude: the cessation of breath equals a spluttering candle equals the dissolving of wind. The sequence has an internal coherence and logic about it. There are also complex accounts of the changes taking place within the subtle or yogic body. The invisible system is legitimized both by the authority of the clinical gaze and by a simultaneous co-ordination with

clearly observable phenomena. When these are combined into a comprehensive, coherent and non-contradictory narrative one can readily understand the claims of scientificity made on its behalf.

Jung emphasized the profoundly *psychological* nature of the Tibetan text whilst bemoaning the primitive level of Western psychological understanding (CW 11, para. 834). Despite Jung's low opinions, the period between the wars *was* a time of psychological awakening in the West. The psychological tone of the Tibetan text dovetailed exactly with a growing Western belief in psychological reality. Religion, in the period between the wars, was searching for psychological and scientific support. Jung's own work was a classic example of this need. The Tibetan text seemed to offer *both* science and psychology in an exemplary form.

Reincarnation: East and West

The Tibetan Book of the Dead has been called a textbook on the science of death. It is also a textbook on the science of immortality. Fantasies of both science and archaic wisdom converge in this text. The science of modern medicine has long declared war on death, as indeed death has also long provided the central mystery of most religions.[7] In particular, immortality through reincarnation is central to Western occultism, spiritualism and theosophy. In recent years an upsurge of public debate on issues surrounding death has caused ruminations on reincarnation to reach far beyond limited esoteric circles. Belief in reincarnation has almost become a touchstone of progressive spirituality. Unlike orthodox Christian belief in a permanent heaven and hell, reincarnationists claim to have science on their side. They invoke the most recent science—e.g. quantum mechanics—as a defence against those disbelievers who hold to an 'outmoded' Newtonian or Cartesian scientific view.

In terms of any defence of reincarnation, Tibet seems an exemplary case: a whole society structured and ordered around reincarnation, with power explicitly bestowed according to it. Instead of vague isolated claims, here could be found an abundance of specific, identifiable reincarnations. In Tibet they were treated almost as everyday occurrences. In marked contrast to the sensationalism associated with attempts to scientifically authenticate past lives in the West, for example using hypnosis, in Tibet such things scarcely evoked comment, wonder or excitement. No other

country, Buddhist or otherwise, had developed the belief in rein-carnation to such a full extent. It was a practice, an institution, which bound together the entire social and political fabric of Ti-bet, and which continues to do so today even in conditions of exile.

The historical and metaphysical details of reincarnation in Ti-betan culture are highly complex and far exceed the scope of this study (Paul, 1982; Goldstein, 1973; Aziz, 1976). Nevertheless, some consideration must be given to its outlines in order to con-trast its symbolic place in Tibetan culture, with its imaginative significance in the West.

This system of reincarnation does not exclusively apply only to the Tibetan élite, to the political and monastic leaders. When we think of Tibetan reincarnation, such figures as the Dalai Lama, Panchen Lama and Karmapa Lama, who have immense power and esteem, usually come to mind. But it has been estimated that over three hundred reincarnate lamas are alive today (Aziz, 1976, p. 346; Stein, 1972). Tibetans recognize at least *three* grades of identifiable reincarnated persons, usually known as 'tulku' among Buddhists in the West (Paul, 1982, p. 40):

1. *Low-level lamas.* These have been rewarded with a human re-birth as a monk for a good and meritorious former life.
2. *Nearly perfected beings.* These are almost religious virtuosos and have been reincarnated for a purpose or mission.
3. *Incarnate Bodhisattvas.* These are tulkus in the fullest sense. For example, the Dalai Lama is considered to be an emination of the Bodhisattva Chenrezig.

The highest point of reincarnate power is the Dalai Lama. The elaborate selection procedures used to identify the reincarnate child are not only designed for oracular purposes, but also to eliminate doubts as to whether the person chosen is the *real* incar-nation. When reincarnation is the main principle of succession to political, social and monastic power, then the system depends entirely on the 'legitimation of the individual selected as the incar-nation' (Goldstein, 1973, p. 446).

Unfortunately, although this system ensured legitimacy, the continuity of rule demanded the mechanism of regent. This was due to the obvious fact that the newly incarnated Dalai Lama was always a child and hence needed adult guidance. As most of the Dalai Lamas died young, Tibet has been largely governed by re-gents (Goldstein, 1973, p. 447). These regents became so powerful

that they created their own, parallel, reincarnation lineages. These élite reincarnated lamas and regents were always granted land, and regency became the prerogative of a small number of lamas from the Gelugpa sect. In practice, a *number* of regent lineages were used to ensure adult political rule. At least six different incarnation lines have been identified since 1757. These six regent lineages, and the families of the various Dalai Lamas, held enormous power in the estate-serfdom system (Goldstein, 1973, pp. 448–9). They were the ruling élite of old Tibet.

Paralleling this system of religious power was one of lay aristocracy. It has been argued that these complex and extensive systems of reincarnation continually needed fresh estates for bestowing upon new incarnations. Hence a power struggle developed to protect landed estates from monastic confiscation. The *religious* aristocracy were relatively secure for obvious reasons and it was the lay aristocracy which suffered the most. Consequently it has been suggested that, over the past few centuries, lay aristocratic land-ownership and social power diminished, whilst monastic, centralized power increased (Goldstein, 1973).

The idea of reincarnation is intimately linked to that of karma. Karma describes a system of descent and human continuity that runs parallel to biology and kinship (Paul, 1982, pp. 26, 29). For example, fathers and sons both are and are not related to each other: 'There are two parallel lineage systems at work in Sherpa culture, one depending on the inheritance of substance or genetic information through sexual reproduction, the other through the inheritance of non-genetic, symbolic information through initiation and teaching' (Paul, 1982, p. 31). Karmic theory separates individuals from kinship allowing them to be reunited into a totally symbolic system of spiritual continuity. Both systems 'tie discrete units—individuals and actions—into larger connected wholes enduring over time' (Paul, 1982, pp. 31, 41). By undermining the individual's kinship relation, with its alliances, its obligations and with its traditional authority patterns based on the family, the control exerted by a centralized bureaucratic government is enhanced (Stein, 1972, p. 139).

Reincarnate lamas have a prestige which ensures them social and spiritual power. Of course, not all choose to mobilize such power. Many remain in obscurity and isolation. But the symbolic power of the reincarnate lamas can generate antagonism. For example, it has been suggested that in border regions of the Himalayas, recently-arrived exiled reincarnate lamas have sometimes overshadowed the established local monks (Paul, 1982, pp. 29, 85).

The reason for the symbolic power of the reincarnate lama is not difficult to assess. The spiritual lineages are organized around the transmission of spiritual energy. While all spiritual practitioners must have a certain degree of this energy, the high reincarnate lamas are believed to actually *embody* it. They represent an intrusion of the divine into the mundane social world. They are thought to return from the dead to reclaim their 'vacant thrones'. That sensitive traveller-poet Maraini calls the reincarnated lama 'an ambassador of the absolute . . . one's own personal representative in the adamantine halls of the cosmos—a sure and comforting link with the indubitable and the permanent' (1952, p. 84).

The Tibetan system therefore presents not simply the unquestioned, divine right of the priest-king, but also that of hundreds of petty rulers. At best it is paternal and benign, at worst a divine tyranny. No wonder that the reincarnate lama is one of the most profound spiritual symbols in Sherpa and Tibetan culture. Reincarnation is also one of the most powerful sacred symbols of spiritual esotericism in the West. But it does not fulfill the same symbolic function as it did, or still does, in Tibetan culture. For example, in the West the intense symbolism of *individual* reincarnation is echoed by the reoccurring symbolism of an immanent *cultural* renaissance. This belief, that the West hovers on the brink of a new era, a cultural rebirth into a higher spiritual age, has been popular for well over one hundred years (Fields, 1981, pp. 34, 135, 163; Roszak, 1977; Metzner, 1979). The discovery of Tibetan Buddhism was integral to this fantasy.

Tibetan Reincarnation and Western Travellers

In 1774 George Bogle, the representative of the British East India Company, visited Tibet. Young and highly sensitive, Tibet and the Tibetans made a profound impression on him:

> When I look on the time I have spent among these hills, it appears like a fairy dream . . . Farewell, ye honest and simple people! May ye long enjoy that happiness which is denied to more polished nations; and . . . defended by your barren mountains, may ye continue to live in peace and contentment, and know no wants but those of nature. (Markham, 1971, p. 177)

Such was the poetic conclusion to his journey. The Tibetans who met Bogle seemed no less moved by his sincerity and openess.

Most importantly, when he struck up a friendship with the Third
Tashi or Panchen Lama, Tibet's most important leader after the
Dalai Lama, it seemed as if the relation between Britain and Tibet
was to be one of mutual esteem and cordiality. For over one hun-
dred years, events were to prove otherwise.

On 12 November 1780 the Tashi (Panchen) Lama tragically
died of smallpox whilst visiting China. Bogle, too, lived for only
a short time after leaving Tibet. In 1783 Samuel Turner followed
in Bogle's footsteps and visited Tibet on behalf of the British East
India Company. His account was to be the major source of British
ideas about the country until late into the second half of the
nineteenth century. Turner was faced with the unusual task of
meeting the claimed reincarnation of the Tashi (Panchen) Lama
who had previously become such firm friends with Bogle. Here
was a strange re-enactment as the successor to Bogle, a pragmatic
and mature military man chosen in typical Western style suppos-
edly on proven ability, met the Third Tashi (Panchen) Lama's
successor, an 18-month-old child chosen in typical Tibetan fashion
by oracles and a mystical system of reincarnation. So, whilst the
hopes of the British were never to be fulfilled in trade from Tibet,
Turner brought back something else which was to prove far more
durable than material goods. This was an idea, a fantasy, a tale of
the marvellous. In his strangely formal and unemotional report
Turner presented Britain and Europe with a detailed and first-
hand experience of the Tibetan system of reincarnate lamas.
True, rumours of such extensive beliefs had reached Europe ear-
lier via several intrepid Catholic priest/monk-explorers, but the
matter-of-fact account from Turner was neither that of the com-
mitted religious specialist nor that of the romantic.

Turner was assured that the 18-month-old child could under-
stand what was said though he could not speak. In a scenario that
was both moving and bizarre, this soldier, diplomat, and trade-
agent delivered a formal address to the child. He was unsure how
much credence to give to the stories of this infant's unspoken
wisdom and ancient lineage. Certainly Turner was impressed by
the child's calm presence and he had nothing to gain by disputing
the Tibetan claims. His was a position of respectful curiosity and
suspended judgement. In an extraordinary speech to the child
Turner said that:

> The Governor-General, on receiving the news of his decease in China,
> was overwhelmed with grief and sorrow and continued to lament his
> absence from the world, until the cloud that had overcast the happi-

ness of this nation was dispelled by his reappearing . . . The Governor
. . . was hopeful that the friendship which had formerly subsisted
between them, would not be diminished . . .

Turner then commented that 'The little creature turned, looking
steadfastly towards me, with the appearance of much attention
while I spoke, and nodded with repeated but slow movements of
the head, as though he understood and approved every word'
(Turner, 1971, pp. 334–5).

During the course of the following century, the system of rein-
carnate lamas, the living gods as they were so often called, was
the subject of wide-ranging assessments from Western observers.
Initially, attitudes towards these all-powerful reincarnate lineages
varied from quizzical curiosity to sceptical indifference. For exam-
ple, Hodgson writing early in the nineteenth century was sympa-
thetic to the lamas' claims to immortality. He referred to it as a
slight perversion, an understandable human folly (1972, pp. 28,
97) Later in the same century, with the widespread loss of confi-
dence and certainty in Christianity and the corresponding rise of
theosophy, occultism and transcendentalism, the Tibetan beliefs
and practices evoked extremes of awe and hostility. For theoso-
phists, the unbroken, unending fabric of Tibetan reincarnations
became a touchstone of ancient mystical truth (Ryan, 1937; Hen-
soldt, 1894). On the other hand, the scholarly Tibetologist Austine
Waddell, writing at the close of the nineteenth century, insisted
that the Fifth Dalai Lama merely 'posed' as the 'deity Avolokita'
and had 'developed the fiction of succession by reincarnate Lamas
and by divine reflexes' (1972, p. 227). He referred to the 'quasi-
Buddhistic' principles of Tibetan religion and complained that
the whole question of reincarnate lamas 'has been purposely ob-
scured, so as to give it the appearance of antiquity' (Waddell, 1972,
p. 229).

Waddell's hostility and scepticism have been the subject of scorn
by many recent advocates of Tibetan Buddhism who single-
mindedly refuse to see its shadow side. Yet the Japanese Buddhist
monk, scholar and explorer, Kawaguchi, writing in 1900 about his
extraordinary three years in Tibet, commented: 'Whatever may
have been the practical effect of incarnation in former times, it
is, as matters stand at present, an incarnation of all vices and
corruptions, instead of the souls of departed Lamas'. He contin-
ued: 'the present mode of incarnation was a glaring humbug, and
. . . was nothing less than an embodiment of bribery . . . At best
it is a fraud committed by oracle-priests at the instance of aristo-

crats who are very often their patrons and protectors' (1979, pp. 422–3). Other travellers were similarly critical: 'a cynical misuse of the theory of reincarnation, the employment of it as a political lever', wrote Landon (1905, vol. 1 p. 355). Given the vastness of eternity in the Eastern imagination as compared with that of the West, Landon argued that the eternal wheel of rebirth is a correspondingly terrifying prospect. It was, concluded Landon, 'a blind horror of the consequences of . . . reincarnation upon which the whole fabric of Lamaism is built' (1905, vol. 2, pp. 40–1).

The comments by Waddell, Landon and Kawaguchi are particularly unique. None were anti-Buddhist and whilst Kawaguchi as a monk was obviously deeply committed to Buddhism, Waddell and Landon too were both highly respectful and sympathetic, especially to the idea of reincarnation. For these men, it was the Tibetan *system* which provoked statements of bitterness and disbelief. This system combined spiritual *continuity* through successive reincarnations, with an absolute spiritual *authority* that derived from an identification with the 'gods', the all-powerful Buddha manifestations.

Reincarnation and Society

Over the past two hundred years, the West has increasingly experienced a retreat into notions of private individuals and of personal subjectivity.[8] Belief in reincarnation has been a part of the development of this almost anti-social individualism, of this desire for occult, personal power. Tibet has long been associated with this belief in, and desire for, personal power. It can be found in popular reading, from Tin Tin to Dr Fu Man-Chu, to Phantasmo Master of the Universe and to Lobsang Rampa. But it would be a mistake to think that such a connection is only to be found in sensational, occult or parapsychological literature. In respected anthropological studies, for example, Tibet is sometimes invoked as *proof* that occult powers exist (Elkin, 1980). Partisan accounts of Tibetan mysticism, of course, unfailingly give prominence to these claims of personal powers (Govinda, 1969; Anderson, 1980; Blofeld, 1970).

Jung insisted that comprehension of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* required a great reversal of the usual standpoint. Unfortunately all the signs point to its absorption into a dominant Western fantasy, that of isolated, heroic, individual subjectivity. Jung himself remarked that the view of life outlined in the Tibetan text 'is not

only lofty, it is manly and heroic' (*CW* 11, para. 856). Evans-Wentz, too, wrote, 'As *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* teaches, the dying should face death . . . calmly and clear-mindedly and heroically . . .' (1974, p. xiv).[9]

A heroic reading of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is perhaps encouraged by the text itself. The essential instruction in the text exhorts the individual to recognize the truth about the peaceful and wrathful images that appear. With hypnotic regularity variations on a formulaic phrase are repeated: O nobly-born recognize that whatever visions appear are reflections of thine own consciousness. The most recent translation puts it quite explicitly: 'the essential point is to recognize with certainty that whatever appears, however terrifying, is your own projection' (Trungpa and Fremantle, 1975, p. 40). Whilst understanding the need to translate this archaic Tibetan text into modern psychological language, these instructions need to be looked at carefully, especially the concept of 'projection'.

It would be easy to imagine that the text is instructing the individual to dismiss the images as ephemeral illusions or as figments of the imagination. Nothing could be more misleading. Recognition has to take place at the deepest level of the imagination and not on a superficial, individualistic one. Many spiritual traditions have called the latter the *false* imagination. The deep imagination operates autonomously, its images have an archetypal resonance, a numinosity, a collective significance that is far beyond any shallow ego-fantasies. When the rational ego believes such images to be its own, to be merely projections that it has cast, out of ignorance, upon the face of Absolute Reality, two possible reactions can result. They are equally disastrous for the psychological life.

On the one hand, the imagery may be treated as thereby having no value whatsoever. Jung is particularly scathing in his criticism of such a belief. Many Eastern yogic texts do, of course, advise the practitioner to treat psychic images as only empty colours and forms. Such instructions, writes Jung, 'must stir a sympathetic chord in the enlightened European'. He continues:

> That sounds thoroughly European and seems to suit our reason to a T. We think we can congratulate ourselves on having already reached such a pinnacle of clarity, imagining that we have left all these phantasmal gods behind. But what we have left behind are only verbal spectres, not the psychic facts that were responsible for the birth of the gods. We are still as much possessed by autonomous psychic contents as if they were Olympians. Today they are called . . . neurotic symptoms. The gods have become diseases . . .' (*CW* 13, para. 54)

The instructions, according to Jung, are not addressed to rational Westerners but to those in the East who are steeped in the psychic world, a world populated by imaginal beings. But Jung insists that the Westerner must be careful when reading such instructions: 'Instead of allowing himself to be convinced once more that the daemon is an illusion, he ought to experience once more the reality of this illusion' (CW 13, para. 55). In the West we have experienced many centuries during which the depth imagination has been driven underground, trivialized, sentimentalized, re-jected. As we move once more towards a re-enchantment of the world it becomes imperative that weight, density, and *reality* are given to psyche and to its images.

On the other hand, instead of being dismissed, these images may be treated seriously, as ego-projections. The classic psycho-logical process is to reclaim such projections. But when the ego erroneously reclaims what was never its own to begin with, it can become quite seriously inflated. As Jung writes: 'Strictly speaking projection is never made: it happens, it is simply there. In the darkness of anything external to me I find, without recognising it as such, an interior, or psychic life that is my own' (CW 12, para. 346). To reclaim these projections is nothing less than recognizing psychic reality. It means stepping from ego-subjectivity and enter-ing the world of the autonomous imagination. Again, Jung writes: 'That is just what the dead man has to recognise . . . The world of gods and spirits is truly "nothing but" the collective uncon-scious inside me' (CW 11, para. 857).

These two reactions, either dismissing the bardo images as be-ing mere valueless illusions, or claiming them as ego-projections, naturally lend a heroic tone to any reading of the Tibetan text. The individual could be imagined as as either slaying the dragon of illusion or else as nobly shouldering full responsibility.[10]

Reincarnation: Hope or Despair?

Reincarnation in Western esoteric literature is always discussed in terms of hope and confidence. Overwhelmingly it is presented both as a comfort in the face of death and as a validation of esoteric beliefs. Numerous studies have emerged in recent years that seek to establish reincarnation as a scientific and an empirical fact. Raymond Moody, for example, in his influential study of individuals who have been pronounced dead yet revived to tell of their experiences, draws upon *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. He

claims that science and empirical evidence corroborate and correspond with the Tibetan text (1978, p. 119).

But, as we have seen, reincarnation is something of a *failure* in Buddhist terms and certainly as far as *The Bardo Thödol* is concerned. If nirvana is the goal, then a reincarnation, even a favourable one, is still only a partial step on the journey. A human reincarnation is also considered to be extraordinarily difficult to achieve. Buddhist teachings stress that it is something very precious, because it occupies an important place on the path to enlightenment. The human rebirth is basically unsatisfactory but can provide good conditions, a reasonable blend of wisdom and incentive for the awakening and fulfilment of the bodhicitta—the enlightenment mind. Even the Bodhisattva's vow to reincarnate, to return to the sorrow of human life for the sake of all sentient beings, is viewed in Buddhist texts as the supreme act of sacrifice. Tibetan Buddhism consistently stresses the painful and terrifying aspects of reincarnation. For example, Gampopa, in his classic twelfth-century work, called it a *vicious* cycle (Gampopa, 1970, p. 55 ff.). The Buddhist poet Sāntideva wrote, 'How can I, without fear, find pleasure on the wheel of rebirth?' (1970, p. 160). What to the Tibetan Buddhist is, at best, a painful and terrifying improvement in their karmic debt, or an example of utter selfless sacrifice, is interpreted by many Westerners as a reassurance. It is waved triumphantly in the face of orthodox Christianity, existentialism and Newtonian–Cartesian science.

What does reincarnation really mean? What actually *is* reincarnated? What part of the body, mind, or soul is reborn? The Buddha repeatedly refused to discuss questions of afterlife. But instead of remaining a paradox, the 'yes/no/neither/both' aspect is frequently lost. Eagerness to literalize reincarnation into a scientific and empirical fact blocks paradox and hence the deep imagination.[11] Recent Western advocates of reincarnation sometimes discuss it in the context of 'wholeness' and 'naturalness'. These are fashionable words in the second half of the twentieth century and need to be looked at cautiously. Indeed, as I have discussed above, the Tibetan system is anything but 'natural' in the sense usually meant in the West. Reincarnation and the associated monastic lineage was profoundly anti-kinship, anti-genetic and anti-nature. It established its own order of things: one that paralleled social life, but which also existed in opposition to it. In Tibetan culture, the parallel systems of kinship and reincarnate lamas are mutually complementary, they serve to produce a *tension* between social affirmation and its negation, between the temporal

and the timeless, the relative and the absolute, the transient and the immortal. In the West, such a tension is totally lacking and the belief in reincarnation relates to isolated individuals. It is part of neither a social nor a spiritual system. The individualistic reincarnation beliefs of the West float detached from everyday social life.

The system of reincarnation also allows Tibetans to sustain a coherent and meaningful social world. Many travellers to Tibet have reported being identified as having been Tibetans in a previous life (Pallis, 1946, p. 229; Bell, 1927), Waddell, for example, was told he was 'a reflex of the Western Buddha, Amitābha' (1972, pp. ix, 567). In the nineteenth century, Queen Victoria was imagined to be either a wrathful or peaceful manifestation of 'Paldenlhamo'. The Russian Czar, too, was taken to be the reincarnation of 'Tsong-kapa' (Landon, 1905, vol. 1, pp. 355–7). This was not just a polite fiction on the part of the Tibetans. By such means they could assign a place within their social world to outsiders, they could incorporate otherwise disturbing influences. Such a procedure is common among traditional peoples. The Australian Aborigines, for example, regularly draw Western friends into their meaningful world by giving them a kinship role: uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, son, daughter, brother, sister. But, while for the Tibetans such a move sustains the *coherence* of their social world, for the Westerner it can reinforce instead a movement *away* from their own social roots. They step instead into a well-prepared place in a Western fantasy about a pure mystical religion uncontaminated by social constraints, doubts and concerns.

In Tibet therefore, what was reincarnated was not simply a heroic individual, but a complex set of social relationships. Reincarnation mythology separated people from so-called 'natural' social relations of kin, and then reconnected them into a highly symbolic system. But in the West, reincarnation as a symbol is profoundly individualistic.

In Tibet, there were two parallel traditions of *continuity* which operated horizontally through time: social kinship and institutionalized reincarnation. Both traditions were related to each other and mutually interacted on countless occasions. Spiritual *authority*, in the form of reincarnate lamas, connected the two parallel systems. There was a *circulation* of these lamas between the timeless continuity of Absolute Reality and the historical continuity of everyday life. In the West, continuity through reincarnation has virtually no relationship to a parallel social world. In fact, the belief in an unbroken stream of individual reincarnations

reinforces the *rejection* of social tradition. Such a belief is formulated in opposition to the everyday world and to dominant Western cultural values. In the West, spiritual authority from exiled reincarnate lamas is not a part of a vertical circularity, of an exchange between the social and cosmic planes. Authority comes as a one-way movement from above, which further negates the social world.

In the West, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is a powerful symbol of highly organized spiritual attainments, an affirmation of a pure spiritual science. Yet, in traditional Tibetan culture it takes its place within the mess, confusions and power struggles of social life. The Kafkaesque, worldly bureaucracy of Tibetan monasticism has its counterpart, and its legitimation, in the confident and smooth-running inner organization of peaceful and wrathful deities, of masterful spiritual guides. These aspects are two sides of the same fundamental image. But in the Western imagination the idealized system of esoteric science has consistently overshadowed the more spiritually-problematical monastic organization. Yet, to treat them independently is to short-circuit the fullness of the image, with its tensions, ambiguities and complexities. The result is a one-sidedly bright image of spiritual purity. Many contemporary Western studies go to great lengths to avoid confronting the shadow side of Tibetan spirituality. One can often encounter a sociological naïvety that stands in stark contrast to claims of scientific scrutiny. For example, whilst the most sophisticated arguments of modern physics are often used to validate Tibetan claims, it is not unusual to be told in the same breath that successive reincarnations were determined by wise men using mysterious and ancient mystical practices (Head and Cranston, 1979, p. 99). Yet, even a superficial study would reveal that these so-called wise men were enmeshed in as complex and tangled a political web as was ever found in Renaissance Italy: few Dalai Lamas ever reached maturity—surely a sinister record. Also, bitter struggles over the choice of incarnation were not infrequent. This was the case, for example, with the Seventh Dalai Lama and also with the Eighth Karma-pa (Goldstein, 1989; 1973, p. 447; Stein, 1972, pp. 147–8). Through its precise, certain and beautifully rational structure, *The Bardo Thödol* legitimizes the powerful claims of the reincarnate lineages of high lamas. They mutually reinforce and complement each other: the monastic system is the public display, whilst *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* goes backstage to reveal the esoteric science.

In the past, this Tibetan system was somewhat mysterious, aloof

and distant. Now, with the exile and rapid dispersal of reincarnate lamas throughout the Western world, these beliefs and their bearers have manifested on our doorstep (Fields, 1981; Trungpa, 1971). Also, exile has provided many lamas with a welcome relief from the reciprocal demands of a parallel social tradition. This traditional social world has been shattered and hence the system of reincarnation must seem to many to be the major source of continuity from old Tibet. In isolation from its strong social twin, the system of reincarnate lamas has had its authority and power both enhanced and yet also relativized. Aspects of Tibetan social life are gradually evolving, perhaps for the first time, independently of traditional spiritual guidance. We are witnessing a separation of the systems. This, in its turn, facilitates the Western fantasy of an autonomous spiritual realm, and of pure spiritual guides uncontaminated by worldliness. As the shadow of Tibetan Buddhism retreats into history, or is left behind in Tibet or in the Himalayas, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* becomes even more isolated from its psychocultural roots. It becomes all the more easier to relocate it into the structure of Western spirituality and spiritual science. Without its shadow, the text's *imaginative* power fades into mere techniques.

Conclusion: *The Bardo Thödol* as Technique

The process described in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* can be described alchemically as a 'dissolutio' followed by a 'coagulatio', as a fragmentation followed by a reunification. Time and again, Tibetan Buddhism takes consciousness to the outermost limits of psychic fragmentation only to then establish order once again. It seems to have the ability to evoke the wildest, most terrifying imaginative forms and then to restructure these into calm images of wholeness. Jung observed that 'in spite of their daemonic aspect, which appears as a confusing chaos of terrifying attributes and monstrosities, a certain order is already discernible . . . It gradually becomes clearer that all these deities are organised into mandalas' (*CW* 11, para. 850). This capacity to fragment and then unite is the source of Tibetan Buddhism's power as a spiritual discipline.

Jung stressed that tendencies towards dissociation are inherent in the human psyche. He writes, 'The instructions of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* in particular help us to see how great is the danger that consciousness will be disintegrated by these [archetypal] fig-

ures' (*CW* 13, para. 50). He continues, 'these systems . . . represent menacingly autonomous and disintegrative tendencies'. The Tibetan yogic practices summon up this fragmentation, they actually invoke it. *The Bardo Thödol* is almost a hymn to the triumph of *logos*, the word, over humanity's oldest mystery, death.

The Tibetans recognized the autonomous reality of these fragmented images. These were acknowledged to have life and personality of their own—Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Yidams, Protectors, Gods and demi-Gods, Dakinis, Ghosts and other innumerable creatures from the various Heavens and Hells. However, one senses that in the West there is an incessant desire to prematurely resolve this apparent fragmentation, that there is overconcern with 'wholeness', rather than a dwelling with multiplicity. As Jung warned, with measured irony, 'Our true religion is a monotheism of consciousness, a possession by it, coupled with a fanatical denial of the existence of fragmentary autonomous systems' (*CW* 13, para. 51). Such a denial, with a one-sided embrace of holism, can produce a dangerously exaggerated shadow (Jung, *CW* 13, para. 52).

The Tibetan Book of the Dead addresses itself to the deepest layers of the psyche and evokes archetypal images from the depths of the imagination. These figures are, as Jung points out, 'autonomous complexes'. They represent the inherent tendency of the psyche to fragmentation, a process that the ego regards with terror. In addition, this Tibetan text not only evokes at an archetypal level, it also *reorganizes* at such a depth. In the West, this process of restructuring the deep imagination was known as 'the art of memory', *Ars Memoria* (Yates, 1978, pp. 90, 120, 181). From classical times through to the Renaissance, a bewildering variety of structures were devised by which to analyse, organize and manipulate the depth imagination. These 'invisible structures' used bizarre, striking images, similar to those of *The Bardo Thödol*, to move and stimulate the imagination. They also used distinctive structures that were themselves symbolic images—trees, ladders, architecture and so on. Such 'memory' devices were used for a variety of purposes, some secular, some religious. A memory device, such as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, could be used by priests to organize, memorize and teach a vast quantity of religious ideas, from iconography to monastic discipline, from philosophy to sacred history. It could also be used as an aid to deep meditational contemplation. So too, like many Western memory devices, it could be used as a propaganda device either for enhancing social stability or for stimulating social reform.

In his commentary, Jung emphasizes the difference between a psychological analysis and systems of spiritual initiation. The latter systems, he writes, 'anticipate the natural course of development and substitute for the spontaneous production of symbols a deliberately selected set of symbols prescribed by tradition. We can see this in the *Exercitia* of Ignatius Loyola, or in the yoga meditations of the Buddhists and Tantrists' (*CW* 11, para. 854). As we have seen, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is not just a system of spiritual guidance but lies at the intersection of fantasies about spiritual science, techniques, mystical purity, archaic continuity, and social and monastic power. The psychological and sociological implications of this convergence still remain to be examined. This will be at the task of the remaining chapters.

5—Spiritual Science, Sacred Technology

'Since Western man can turn everything into a technique, it is
true in principle that everything that looks like a method is
either dangerous or condemned to futility'
                                        (C. G. Jung, CW 11, para. 871)

Westerners sympathetic to Eastern religions have consistently
searched for metaphors by which to validate and give them status.
One of the earliest of such attempts was by William Jones in the
1780s. This brilliant administrator, judge, linguist, scholar and
politician founded the Asiatic Society of India in 1784. Personally
excited by the richness of Eastern culture and religion, Jones
looked for a way of convincing eighteenth-century Europeans of
its value. In this quest he discovered the idea of comparative my-
thology, and compared the Indian gods and philosophies with
those of classical Greece: Maru was Saturn; Indra was Jupiter;
Vilimic, Vyasa and Kalidasa were the Hindu equivalent of Homer,
Plato and Pindar (Jones, 1970).

In addition to inaugurating comparative mythology and Indo-
European studies, Jones, perhaps inadvertently, realized that any
East–West dialogue had to strike a note which resonated on a
deep symbolic level. On such a level it is unimportant whether
Indra can be truly substituted for Jupiter. Greek culture was re-
vered and uncritically esteemed in England. It was considered
to provide the exemplary model of philosophy, art and culture
(Jenkyns, 1980). Jones's comparison touched upon a root-meta-
phor of eighteenth and nineteenth-century European belief. It
struck a chord in the mythological foundations of European
ideals, and hence helped to raise the status of Indian culture.

The image of 'science' has similarly been used since the eigh-
teenth century in attempts to legitimize and validate Eastern reli-
gion, particularly Buddhism, in the West. The value and truth of

both 'science' and 'Greece' were generally treated as self-evident in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. Although ancient Greece no longer occupies such an exalted position in the Western imagination, science, in one form or another, still does.[1]

The earliest attempts to connect Western science with Buddhism were part of a wider concern with healing the split and antagonism between religion and science. Late in the nineteenth century, attempts were made to heal this rift by interpreting religion as being both rational and scientific (Drummond, 1885; Hensoldt, 1894). Many writers demanded scientific status for religious beliefs and principles. They wanted religion to share the progressive optimism which surrounded science and technology at that time. For example, Monier-Williams, in his influential 1889 study of Buddhism, quoted the theosophist Col. Olcott:

> Since we have attained, in the last half-century, the theory of evolution, the antiquity of man, the far greater antiquity of the world itself, the correlation of physical forces, the conservation of energy, spectrum analysis, photography, the locomotive engine, electric telegraph, spectroscope, electric light, and the telephone (to which we may now add the phonograph), who shall dare to fix a limit to the capacity of man? (1964)

Many Westerners in the nineteenth century claimed that a rational, empirical Buddhism, rather than a Christianity which relied on faith alone, was best suited to healing the gap between religion and science. Because Buddhism apparently had no gods and did not depend on blind faith, it seemed pre-eminently suited to the scientific mind. For example, the influential Japanese priest Soyen Shaku, who taught in nineteenth-century America, consistently presented Buddhism as a rational and scientific religion. His emphasis was continued by his famous student D. T. Suzuki in his early writings. The Open Court Publishing Company and the journal the *Monist*, which was started by Hegeler in America in 1887, also stressed this theme of Buddhism's scientific and rational basis (Fields, 1981, pp. 126–8, 136–8).

So, instead of science being de-literalized and read imaginatively, spiritual reformers were demanding that religion be read literally, as espousing rational and scientific truths. Blavatsky, for example, never spoke of miracles, only of laws. Spiritual masters, she insisted, 'were not miracle makers but more like spiritual scientists who had mastered the objective cause-and-effect laws of the universe' (Fields, 1981, pp. 88, 92; Ryan, 1937; Younghus-

band, 1935). Similarly, Alexandra David-Neel wrote in 1929, 'None in Tibet deny that . . . [wondrous] events may take place, but no one regards them as miracles . . . The so-called wonders, they think, are as natural as common daily events and depend on the clever handling of *little known laws and forces*' (Kakar, 1982, p. 108; David-Neel, 1971).

Karma and Western Science

The idea of 'karma' fitted admirably into this rational, scientific mythology, and was the corner-stone of the belief in Buddhism's scientific status. Late in the nineteenth century, Huxley, in his lecture on *Evolution and Ethics,* related the laws of karma to those of evolution. Waddell, similarly, pointed to karma's acceptance, 'as regards its general principle', by many modern scientists (1972, pp. 100–1; Hensoldt, 1894, pp. 650–1; Grenard, 1974, p. 303).

Rebirth is basically nothing but the continuity of karma. As was seen in the previous chapter, reincarnation through the action of karma has been the focus of many scientific claims: for example, whilst working on the translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* in the 1920s, Evans-Wentz argued that the doctrine of rebirth 'is thoroughly scientific and I believe that the scientists are now on the trail of proving it scientifically . . . I think it will be done within the next fifty years' (Winkler, 1982, p. 47). Earlier he had been searching for any living cultural traditions that were based on a belief in reincarnation and claimed to have discovered one in the heart of Western Europe. The original inhabitants of the Celtic countries, according to Evans-Wentz, had such an extensive belief system. He argued that such beliefs were still alive in the remote regions of Celtic countries early in this century. He devoted a large part of his study, *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries,* to defending these beliefs in terms of science (Evans-Wentz, 1977).

That poetic traveller to Tibet, Maraini, wrote that Buddhists 'have been able to study death with the simplicity and detachment of an industrialist studying a phase of production. To them, death is not a mystery but a problem' (1952, p. 172). The laws of production to which Maraini referred were those of karma. These laws, of cause and effect, are still invoked as evidence of Buddhism's rationality. One Western commentator recently wrote of karma: 'The moral principle of the Universe is a scientific law' (Kapleau, 1974, p. 23). One can readily understand the importance of such claims in the past, given the European belief in its own superiority

derived substantially from Western science. Such arguments gave Eastern spiritual traditions a certain validity. But for our purposes, we need to look closely at the images by which karma has been imagined.

In the nineteenth century, karma was overwhelmingly imagined as being linear, serial, almost mechanical. Billiard balls striking one another and the passage of ocean waves were the kind of analogies used. Buddhism was also quickly integrated into the image of Darwinian evolution (Hensoldt, 1894; Carus, 1915, pp. 32, 261; Fields, 1981, pp. 147, 159). A particular form of social-Darwinism pervaded this imagining, stressing an upward-curving trajectory of civilization and consciousness. Some, like Huxley, chose to focus on the *mechanics* of the process. Others preferred to celebrate the ever-ascending *trajectory*. These images of karma also coloured the humans who were envisaged to be masters of the process. Nietzsche, Wagner, and even Bucke with his idea of cosmic consciousness, placed Buddhism high on such an evolutionary curve (Bucke, 1969; Dumoulin, 1981; Welbon, 1968). In these fantasies the Buddha becomes a spiritual superman, one of the élite vanguard leading humanity's evolutionary struggle by mastering the laws of karma. Spiritual masters were viewed as the apex in the evolution of intelligent life (Younghusband, 1935).

Karma has been imagined in terms of Will, Force, Action, Power, Consciousness and Being. As Carus commented in his very popular *The Gospel of Buddha* (1894): 'the very being of man consists in his karma . . .' (1915, p. x).

The science that was being invoked at this time, and through to the 1930s, was not, of course, that of quantum mechanics, of relativity and a-causality. It was orthodox Newtonian–Cartesian science. There was confidence that the direct extension of such a scientific perspective into the field of psychic research would confirm the claims of mysticism and spirituality. In 1929, the famous Tibetologist Alexandra David-Neel, for example, wrote: 'Everything that relates, whether closely or more distantly, to psychic phenomena and to the action of psychic forces in general, should be studied just like any other science' (1971, p. vi). It was not so much the methods and philosophy of Newtonian science that were criticized as the failure of the scientific community to direct its attention towards psychic and paranormal phenomena. It must be remembered too, that under the rubric of science was included psychoanalysis, particularly Jung's work on symbols and archetypes. Even Jung at that time insisted that his work was both empirical and scientific. Evolutionary theory, psychic research and

depth psychology, all imagined as being empirically scientific, were the backbone of the belief in karma as a science, until the Second World War (David-Neel, 1971, pp. 291–320; Evans-Wentz, 1977, pp. xi–xvi).

The nineteenth-century mechanistic fantasy of karma still persists, but there has also been an important shift towards more organic images. Billiard balls and ocean waves have been replaced by subtle non-dualistic energy fields, time warps and relative space. This brilliant display of the imagination tends to become lost beneath a very serious literalism. Such a perspective imagines evolution to be less a heroic struggle by one species, or by one form of consciousness, and more of a contextual, ecological process. Instead of stressing *hierarchies* of consciousness there is a focusing upon the *relationship* between humans and other forms of conscious life, even rocks and plants. There is a complex weaving of contexts: cosmic, global, historical, social, familial and so on. A shift has also occurred from karmic mechanics to karma's relationship to relative space and time, from karma as individual Will to universal field theory.[2]

Concern about a split between science and religion is still strong in the second half of the twentieth century. But now hope for a healing of 'the split' focuses around belief in a mutual *convergence* towards ultimate truth. It has been claimed, for example, that the convergence between quantum physics and Eastern mysticism is important because of the prestige of physics. Capra calls the latter 'a shining example of a hard science' (1982, p. 119; 1975). The argument is that if physics is forced to transcend mechanistic and reductionist thinking, then other sciences must take such a radical perspective seriously. The contemporary resurgence of interest in Eastern religion, including Tibetan Buddhism, is viewed as part of this *reaction* to scientific dualism, mechanism, reductionism and materialism (Anderson, 1980, p. 117; de Riencourt, 1951, pp. 251–7).

There is therefore still an insistence upon the *scientific* status of Buddhism—not Newtonian–Cartesian science, but science nevertheless. Science, in whatever form, is still consistently chosen to provide the common basis for understanding. In his recent, popular, introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, Anderson goes to great lengths to reassure the reader that Tibetan Buddhism is not weird but sensible and pragmatic (1980, p. 11; Watson, 1974, pp. 225–6). The spectacular claims of parapsychological feats associated with Tibetan Buddhism surpass even those of India and Hinduism, yet these are not attributed to faith and miracles but to a

meticulously empirical and rational understanding of cause and
effect (David-Neel, 1971; Anderson, 1980; Chang, 1974). Science
imagines Buddhism in its own image. The mutual imaginings be-
tween Western science and Buddhism have been important to
both for well over one hundred years. The most recent Buddhist–
science synthesis seems to have forgotten the earlier tradition.
Transpersonal psychology and the new physics have replaced both
psychic research and depth psychology at the leading edge of the
attempted synthesis of science and religion. But they frequently
forget that the *imaginative* interchange is also important and not
just the literal rejection of dualism, or Newtonianism.

In 1937 Jung was aware of this apparent convergence between
religion and science, but rather than trying to establish the scien-
tificity of religion, or vice versa, he insisted upon an *imaginative*
middle ground. He wrote that in earlier centuries:

> There did exist an intermediate realm between mind and matter, i.e.,
> a psychic realm of subtle bodies . . . Obviously the existence of this
> intermediate realm comes to a sudden stop the moment we try to
> investigate matter in and for itself, apart from all projection; and it
> remains non-existent so long as we believe we know anything conclu-
> sive about matter or the psyche. But the moment when physics
> touches on the untrodden, untreadable regions, and when psychology
> has at the same time to admit that there are other forms of psychic
> life besides the acquisitions of personal consciousness . . . then the
> intermediate realm of subtle bodies comes to life again, and the physi-
> cal and the psychic are once more blended in an indissoluble unity.
> (CW 12, para. 394)

Jung was optimistic and continued: 'We have come very near this
turning-point today'.

Karma has provided the West with an important vessel within
which to enact its fantasies about a religious science, and a scien-
tific religion. Out of these various scientific paradigms from the
nineteenth to the twentieth centuries has arisen a range of images
about karma and individual destiny: an existential struggle, a me-
chanical relentlessness, a romantic and heroic effort of Will, a
cosmic organism, the workings of a natural moral justice, the re-
morseless unfolding of Pure Spirit, the unceasing patterns of rela-
tive time and space (Kapleau, 1974: Choron, 1963).

In most other branches of Buddhism, with the possible excep-
tion of Zen, it is usually the Buddha who stands out as the prime
figure of the imagination. But in the Tibetan tradition it is the
lamas and the spiritual masters who dominate. The 'science' of

the mastery of karma and the legitimation of the Tibetan reincarnation lineages go hand in hand. If *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is the Baedeker of the underworld, its guidebook or map, then karma is its logic, its grammar, its mathematics. As manifestations of a cosmic morality, demonstrated by the very latest Western science, the lineages of reincarnated lamas claim the validity of scientific law. The image of a cool, aloof and objective Buddhism has often found its way, especially in references to the Tibetan tradition, into metaphors of spiritual scientists, inner-technologists, cosmic industrialists and so on.

Only occasionally do we read of religion's different-but-equal claims to be of value in the modern world. The Buddhism of faith, and especially that of imagination, seem to have been swamped in this continuing rush to give it a literal scientific and rational legitimation (Bishop, 1989b). Although this applies to the Western reading of Eastern religions in general, it is most specifically found in relation to Buddhism, and in particular to Tibetan Buddhism or Vajrayāna.

The metaphor of scientificity has four basic aspects.

A) THE SPIRITUAL SUPERIORITY OF THE EAST

The argument that the East is far superior to the West in spiritual matters is popular and convincing. Such reminders of Eastern spiritual sophistication are sober and humbling. They remind us of the difficulties in any East–West dialogue. Thoreau, for example, voiced such a claim, and Emerson compared Buddhist ideas with the coarse materialism of the Western industrial societies. To Thoreau, the East offered a pristine and original spirituality. Walt Whitman similarly considered the East to be spiritually superior (Fields, 1981, pp. 55, 60, 64). Jung, as seen in Chapter Three, has presented this argument in its most developed and sophisticated form.

But within this vision of Eastern spiritual superiority, Tibetan Buddhism is frequently claimed to be the *most* superior. It has been asserted that Tibetan Buddhism is the last outpost of ancient (hence the most prestigious) wisdom, and that it is 'probably the most *complete* system of Buddhism in the world' (Anderson, 1980, p. 5).[3] Vajrayāna has been imagined as the *culmination* of Buddhism (Head and Cranston, 1979, p. 95). It has been said that it stands in relation to Theravādin Buddhism as 'higher mathematics' does to 'lower mathematics'. Evans-Wentz considered it to be

the 'apex of the pyramid of the whole of Buddhism' (Fields, 1981, p. 287).

B) WESTERN SCIENCE AND EASTERN RELIGION ARE COMPLEMENTARY

Frequently, East and West are seen as being complementary, and as the East having achieved on the inner plane what the West has achieved on the outer (David-Neel, 1971, pp. 3–4). It is commonly argued that while Tibet was 'backward in its *mechanical* technology, it was highly advanced' in terms of spiritual technology.[4] A frequently used metaphor is that of inner and outer astronauts. A recent anthropological film on a Tibetan monastic community stated that the construction of a special mandala was 'the psychic equivalent to Cape Canaveral' (Peissel, 1980). Only in the much overused and misused case of Shamanism do we find such a similar concentration of scientific and technological imagery. In de Riencourt's book, we read of 'countless Tibetan laboratories where occult forces are tested and manipulated'; of 'mysterious workshops'; of 'amazing techniques'. We are assured 'it is a real science' (1951, pp. 264–9). Another author insists that 'Tibetan Buddhism is a self-development technology', and that it has its own spiritual techniques (Anderson, 1980, p. 19; Fields, 1981, p. 305). The mandala is the most popular of such so-called universal spiritual tools. They have been called sacred maps, computers, and information systems. It is significant that the mandala, as an imaginative concept, was introduced into the West primarily through Tibetan Buddhism.[5]

C) THE EAST IS MORE SCIENTIFICALLY ADVANCED THAN THE WEST

It is frequently asserted that the East has anticipated many conclusions only recently arrived at by modern Western science (Wilson, 1973, p. 78; Watson, 1974, p. 225). For example, it is not unusual to read that recent theories of quantum and particle physics were anticipated thousands of years ago in the East, with its non-dualistic and relativistic philosophies (de Riencourt, 1951, p. 252). It is also claimed that the East is superior to the West in cosmology and astronomy; that it had an image of an infinite, constantly moving, universe many millenium before the West arrived at a similar conclusion (Matthiesson, 1981, pp. 65, 68; Head and Cranston, 1979, pp. 513–15; Capra, 1975).

In these cases, scientific knowledge has been reduced to an *object* and not a process. We are faced with what Schutz calls 'recipe knowledge' (1976). Instead of considering science to be a particular view or process which explores and *creates* a world, it is evaluated in terms of its hoard of supposed *facts*. One author, in a popular synthesis of various sciences and wisdom teachings, writes that myth 'has begun to precipitate into fact' (Blair, 1977, pp. 55, 63). To literalize the systems of spiritual mythology in such a way is as great an error as dismissing them as mere childish fantasy.[6] Knowledge has become a literal commodity. But Tibetan Buddhism and its abundance of rich imagery is primarily involved in a process of imaginary *creation* and exploration. It is, in its entirety, a fantasy, a healing fiction as Jung would call it (Hillman, 1983).

d) RE-EVALUATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SCIENCE

Science and religion function both as systems of *explanation* about the world, and also as aids to *contemplation* about the mystery of things. Through the centuries, scientific ideas have consistently stimulated experiences of religious awe and wonder. Copernicus, Kepler, Bruno, Newton and Einstein, among others, have seen little conflict between their scientific systems and the mystical sense of the Holy. Indeed, they conceived their scientific work as being a form of devotion, as an amplification of human understanding about the divine coherence of the Universe. The nineteenth-century evolutionists challenged the system of religious explanation about the world and overthrew the dominance of its claims. However, many spiritually-inclined still used the images promoted by science as springboards for mystical contemplation. But whilst such assistance towards an experiential realization is pivotal to any religion, it has generally been viewed as a by-product of a science. Conversely, within the mystical perspective, religious explanations about the world have been considered secondary to the prime aim of facilitating gnosis, or spiritual insight.

The 'new science' rejects the idea that the promotion of spiritual experience is secondary to science's central purpose of providing explanatory systems about the world. It claims that its theories have both an objective *and* a mystical validity. Indeed, it rejects any separation between explanation and experience. It has been asserted, for example, that 'the formula $E = mc^2$ is a religious truth' (Larsen, 1977, p. 137; Anderson, 1980, p. 111). To support such claims, the statements of Eastern mysticism, particularly those of

Hinduism and Buddhism, have been consistently invoked (Capra, 1975; Le Shan, 1974). These have been equated with equivalent descriptions of the world proposed by the new science.

By claiming *both* the experience and the explanation to be literally true, the new science is in danger of creating a new dogmatic theology. The religions of the world are searched for their scientificity whilst scientific pronouncements are carefully examined for their mystical sentiments. Religious practices become scientific techniques; scientific practices become mystical techniques. Whilst the mythological perspective has always believed this situation to be the case on an *imaginative* level, the new science is claiming it to be *literally* true: science 'proves' the claims of (Eastern) mysticism; (Eastern) mysticism 'proves' the claims of the new science. For example, in his popular introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, Anderson writes: 'The vajrayāna is a religious path orientated toward developing people who are capable of experiencing a non-Newtonian, non-Cartesian reality, consciously and purposefully living in such a universe' (1980, p. 117). References to Newton and Descartes in such passages have nothing to do with scientific discourse. They are being used symbolically. Such claims confuse the essential difference between religious experiences and explanatory systems.

Sacred Technology

Referring to her experiences in the 1920s as a student of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet, Alexandra David-Neel wrote: 'Psychic training, rationally and scientifically conducted, can lead to desirable results' (1971, p. vi). Tibetan Buddhism, or Vajrayāna, is particularly vulnerable to being reduced to a series of advanced techniques. But to describe it in such a way can lead to an emphasis on psychic powers, magical masters, spiritual technocrats, mystical astronauts and religious athletes.[7] Athletics can replace devotion or investigation and turn the religions of the world into a kind of spiritual Olympics. The myth of inner progress can easily be substituted for the myth of outer progress. In Tibet, the practice of Vajrayāna may well be considered as consisting of techniques, but this is within a complex traditional and cultural setting of devotion and faith. The image of 'technique' rests on an entirely different ocean of symbols than it does in the West. Also, there is no reason to believe that a tool taken from one culture will produce exactly the same results in another. The incorporation of Tibetan Buddhism into the domains of humanistic and transper-

sonal psychologies has probably accentuated its imaginative re-
duction into a universal technology. Certainly there is some
murmuring of disquiet from within these paradigms; complaints
that they are reflectively and theoretically impoverished, that they
consist merely of bundles of therapeutic and growth *techniques*
(Farson, 1978; Harman, 1981). If these practices were referred to
in terms of spiritual 'craft' or 'explorations', or 'play', instead of
relying almost solely upon metaphors drawn from technology,
then one could readily appreciate the different imaginative re-
sponses that would be evoked.

The one-sided technocratic fantasy about Tibetan Buddhism
can also be seen in the comparative failure of Pure Land Bud-
dhism to stimulate the Western imagination. Despite the over-
whelming popularity of Pure Land beliefs in Tibet (and in all
other Mahāyāna countries), it has received very little emphasis in
Western commentary. This may be because such Buddhism is not
readily reduced to a technique, nor is it conducive to scientific
status, and in addition in relies almost totally upon faith. Hence
Pure Land beliefs do not easily fit the dominant scientific image
that the West seems to want from Buddhism (Bishop, 1989*b*; Su-
zuki, 1970).

The use of science and technology as a metaphor has been a
rich and rewarding one in the field of comparative knowledges,
but it must always be remembered that science itself is a metaphor
and a symbol. Whilst this appeal to science, in one form or an-
other, is often an attempt to legitimize these spiritual practices of
Vajrayāna Buddhism in the West, on an imaginative level the re-
verse is true. Vajrayāna Buddhism, with its mandalas, mantras and
mudras, is reinforcing the fantasy, so prevalent in the industrial
West, of science as a series of techniques, as means to an end. By
not de-literalizing Vajrayāna, by continuing to treat it merely as a
system of positive knowledge, paradox is denied and the imagina-
tion blocked.

Structured or Unstructured Imagery

Jung's studies in Eastern religion also raise the issue of the use of
collectively structured images as opposed to individually sponta-
neous ones. There is some debate, for example, in humanistic and
depth psychology, over the difference between guided imagining
that uses prestructured imagery to initiate inner revelation and
individual, spontaneous, unprepared fantasy (Watkins, 1977).

There seems to be a continual struggle in a spiritual practice to discipline the imagination and to harness it for its own purposes. In such cases it is important to ascertain both the social and individual implications. To what extent, for example, is the individual's symbol-forming capacity being appropriated, paralysed, blocked or denied, let alone channelled into a particular direction, by stereotyped religious imagery? Jung wrote that '... every closed system of religion has an undoubted tendency to suppress the unconscious in the individual as much as possible, thus paralysing his fantasy activity. Instead, religion offers stereotyped symbolic concepts that are meant to take the place of his unconscious once and for all' (*CW* 5, para. 80).

In his analyses of Pure Land Buddhist meditation, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead, The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation,* and *The Secret of the Golden Flower,* Jung was mainly concerned with them as *statements* of psychological processes. He was not praising them as *methods* to be adopted. When asked by a psychologist how dreams fitted into his system, Jung replied mischievously, 'What system?' He also wrote, 'there are ways which bring us nearer to living experience, yet we should beware of calling these ways "methods". The very word has a deadening effect' (*CW* 11, paras. 501; 868–71). If Jung was averse to his own ideas being reduced to methods and techniques one can imagine he would be equally opposed to the same thing happening to Eastern religious traditions. As Hillman points out, 'discipline of the imagination does not have to become a program for the imagination' (1977, p. 40).

There have been numerous studies connecting Jung's ideas to Zen meditation, but few which discuss his work in relation to Tibetan Vajrayāna practices (Lauf, 1977; Beyer, 1973). This is a strange omission when it is realized that a considerable proportion of Jung's writings on Eastern religion was specifically directed towards commentaries on two extremely esoteric Tibetan texts. Whatever the reason for this omission, the studies on Jung and Zen fail to bring out the issue of pre-structured meditational imagery (Mokusen, 1977; Kasuli, 1977). This is unfortunate, for it also tends to avoid the problem of Eastern ideas being used randomly as techniques in the West. But Zen too has suffered the misfortune of being constantly invoked as an example of Eastern pragmatics. In a recent study of bio-feedback, for example, it is claimed that 'Zen has no sacred literature of its own and treats the sacred literature of Buddhism as so much waste paper' (Cade and Coxhead, 1979, p. 167). This brief and totally erroneous appraisal then allows the author simply to ignore the complex social,

religious, philosophical, mythological and symbolic contexts of Zen.

In the West, the debate over the use of imagery that is either spontaneous and individual, or else systematized and cultural, is centuries old. Medieval and Renaissance Christianity, with their extensive guidelines for mystical experiences and practices, and the complex systems of occult and hermetic sciences, have all insisted upon a hierarchically graduated and well-defined series of steps. Yet, even within these traditions there have been counter-movements upholding the efficacy of unsystematic and spontaneous approaches to inner exploration. Frances Yates, for example, in her pioneering study of the 'Art of Memory', quotes one ancient authority as insisting that everyone must form their *own* images (1978, p. 101).

A standard formula, repeatedly stressed in Tibetan Buddhism, insists that *correct* philosophical interpretation must go hand in hand with *correct* practice. This is one of its central teachings. Contained within this seductively simple doctrine are, of course, the fantasies of 'correct practice' and 'correct results' (Lauf, 1977, p. x; Guenther, 1975, p. viii; Guenther, 1971). Such a perspective insists that these spiritual 'tools' are of value *only* when used in a highly specific way and in a particular pedagogical context. This is a powerful image of a scientific religion, or a religious science. 'Correct' practice (e.g. formal meditational exercises) and 'correct' theory (e.g. original texts, technically correct translations, correct commentaries and interpretations, scholarly readings) are monitored and guided by monastic and quasi-monastic experts. These are the twin beacons by which a scholastic and monastic Tibetan Buddhism in exile fixes bearings, defines the coordinates of its truths, and guides its adepts along its well-charted and strictly-defined imaginative routes. Western scholarship's fantasies of order, correctness and discipline dovetail exactly with those of monastic Tibetan Buddhism as presented in an idealized form by its élite. This task of mutual convergence has been much simplified since the exile of Tibetan Buddhism from the mess, confusions and shadows of secular power.

Vajrayāna places enormous emphasis on the disciplined use of imagery and it would appear that the individual's imagination is being captured by the spiritual tradition. But this is a difficult question because the eventual determining factor over whether Tibetan meditational practices mark an uneasy marriage of the individual and the system, rather than a dictatorship of the spirit, is the psychological attitude towards the visualized imagery. These prestruct-

ured images are only *aids* to meditation and to the exploration of the imagination. For the time being, perhaps we can only refer to the image's *potential* capacity to evoke and capture the imagination by virtue of meaningful or bizarre similitude. This would be strictly in keeping with the philosophy of Buddhist meditation in which the sole datum is the subjective factor, the attitude of the adept; and any technique is valueless that does not develop awareness and insight, regardless of the particular exploration or technique.

The Renaissance philosopher Ficino similarly used specific music, colours, images and diagrams for keeping the imagination alive (Moore, 1978). It is not that meditating on Tara, or Apollo, for example, initiates a Tara, or Apollonic, experience, rather that such activity prepares the imagination for the *reception* of phenomena with these qualities when they occur. This massage and preparation of the imagination for *potential* responses is the prime purpose of meditating on prestructured imagery.

The use of imagery is only connected to one path in Vajrayāna. This could be called the Path of Form, as compared with the Path of Non-Form, usually known as the Mahāmudrā (Blofeld, 1970, pp. 229 ff.; Chang, 1974). The Mahāmudrā practice is concerned with letting the mind rest in its 'natural' state. Generally, both paths are used so that the active invoking of images is balanced by a detached observation/participation in the arising and passing away of phenomena. Mahāmudrā and the practice of creating and dissolving images act as protection against the concretization of prestructured symbols.

However, such is the dominance of disciplined spiritual *systems* in matters of inner exploration, that unstructured or differently organized approaches can seem ineffectual by comparison. Even when spontaneous and individual inner imagery is granted some validity, it is frequently argued that it is of an inferior quality to that produced by systematic spiritual training. One influential commentator recently wrote that 'this viewpoint is agreed on by all the major approaches to mystical training: Yoga training, Zen, the Gurdjieff "work", etc . . . The most profound mystical experiences . . . are the "acquired" or "trained" experiences' (Le Shan, 1974, p. 261).[8] Such claims have an in-built circularity: of course systems of mystical training believe that trained experiences are the most profound.

Structure Versus Content

For the West to be able even to consider Tibetan Buddhism as a repository of techniques, it had to be imagined initially as *a system.*

This particular fantasy emerged only slowly in the West (Strickman, 1977; Welbon, 1968; De Jong, 1974). But the critical work in this field was carried out in the middle of the last century, particularly by Hodgson (Hodgson, 1972). By 1853 the explorer-scholar Cunningham was sufficiently confident to refer to the Tibetan Buddhist 'system', as if it was a long-established and coherent fact (1977). Even before this systematization could take place, Buddhism had to be distinguished from Hinduism rather than being viewed as merely a major sect. The movement to segregate, isolate, define, categorize and systematize the practices designated as 'religious' and 'Buddhist' is a very specific fantasy. As was discussed in Chapter Four, it is a classic procedure of structural imagining, a perspective from the archetype of the senex.

Buddha-Dharma first became Buddhism, and then Buddhism became a *world religion*. By the beginning of the twentieth century it had its own Bible, commandments, fundamental principles agreed to by all 'Buddhist' sects, and its international conferences. Concerned Westerners played a major part in initiating all of this activity (Fields, 1981). There is a marked difference between a religion that is imagined as being culturally and geographically localized, such as that of the Australian Aborigines, and one imagined as being a *world religion*, such as Buddhism, Islam or Christianity. A geographically specific sense of the sacred yields to systematized abstractions and universalities (Hodgson, 1972, pp. 100–1). Since the nineteenth century, Westerners have continually sought to grasp some *essence* of Buddhism, to systematize it, and to encode it.[9]

Paradoxically, those who in the name of a post-mechanical and non-dualistic world-view search Eastern religious systems for their 'techniques' follow precisely the same imaginative trajectory as their nineteenth-century predecessors. Such a trajectory seeks to appropriate the inner world from above and to encode it as a highly abstract and orderly system. This senex fantasy searches for universal and unchanging structures. These are exactly what such a perspective values most, everything else is merely ephemeral.

Spiritual technology is invariably viewed as being independent of its originating mythological and social milieu, and as being indifferent to time and place. To continue the metaphor, studies have shown the enormous and largely unknown impact that the introduction of a machine or technique from industrial capitalism can have on a non-Western culture, yet the problems associated with the introduction of so-called 'inner technology' are seldom discussed. One influential introduction to Tibetan Buddhism has argued that its basic visualization techniques could be used in any

religion, such as Christianity, merely by substituting an image of the Virgin for Tara, or of Christ for Chenrezig (Blofeld, 1970). As we have seen in Chapter Four, a similar argument has been advanced about *The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* where it has been suggested that the Buddhist images be replaced by Christian ones. The deep questions that arise when taking a complex spiritual system out of its own milieu and using it in completely different circumstances are simply side-stepped.

There is a remarkable imaginative consistency throughout Western literature about Tibetan Buddhism. Overwhelmingly, the Tibetan systems have been imagined as: durable, ancient, eternal, universal, inspirational, abstract, omnipotent, omniscient and geometric. (Seduction, beauty, humour and eroticism, for example, have usually taken second place.) Such images about the structure of Tibetan Buddhism readily lend themselves to technocratic fantasies. Philosophical questioning can easily become technological manipulation, whilst imaginative reflection could become merely a means to achieve an already prescribed end.

6—The New Monasticism

'All lamas are venerated as masters of law and directors of
other men, and each one is a superior of some monastery and
has his own diocese, income and court, and lives in splendour;
... In short the Lamas of Thibet are like our Bishops and
Archbishops.'—Father Ippolito Desideri, 1716
(De Filippi, 1937, pp. 210–11)

The West has been fascinated by the monasticism of Tibet for
over two centuries. Respect has consistently been shown towards
it, even if somewhat grudgingly. The influential sociologist Max
Weber, for example, wrote:

> The development of an ever more inclusive religious literature . . . ,
> some 5,000 metres above sea level with a frozen earth eight months
> of the year and with a pure nomadic people is under the circum-
> stances so magnificent an achievement that it only could have been
> achieved under the hierarchic, rigidly organised Lamaistic Monastic
> Buddhism with its boundless power over the laity. (1967, p. 289)

Tibetan monasticism has always been considered in terms of
power, as well as in terms of spirituality and scholarship. The
monastic system came to be imagined as being synonymous with
Tibetan Buddhism, perhaps even with Tibetan culture itself. The
first British travellers to Tibet, Bogle in 1774 and Turner in 1783,
were both impressed by the system and order of Tibetan Bud-
dhism, by the well-regulated government administered by the mo-
nastic élites (Markham, 1971, pp. 33, 196; Turner, 1971, pp. 308–
10). Turner, for example, wrote:

> A sovereign Lama, immaculate, immortal, omnipresent and omni-
> scient is placed at the summit of their fabric. He is esteemed the
> vice regent of the only God, the mediator between mortals and the
> Supreme . . . He is also the centre of all civil government, which de-
> rives from his authority all influence and power.

Two events epitomize the Western fantasy about the relationship between monasticism and Tibetan religion. At the end of the nineteenth century, the famous English Tibetologist Austine Waddell bought a complete temple! He wrote: 'I felt compelled to purchase a Lamaist temple with its fittings; and prevailed on the officiating priests to explain to me in full detail the symbolism and the rites as they proceeded' (1972, p. viii). In 1930, Sven Hedin, that renowned Danish explorer of Central Asia, was commissioned to find 'Lamaist temples' suitable either for transportation—stone by stone, ritual object by ritual object—to Stockholm and Chicago, or else to provide details such that replicas could be built (Hedin, 1933). In these two examples Tibetan Buddhism as a monastically organized and idealized system of techniques receives its most concrete imaginings. These monasteries or temples were imagined to be almost factories of sacred technology, or laboratories of spiritual science (Maraini, 1952, p. 172).

Tibetan Buddhism has always been imagined in the West to be far more orderly, coherent, *systematic* than it really was or is. Certainly such an idealized fantasy of Tibetan religion can easily be understood. It presents the world with a powerful persona: its overwhelming volume of philosophical texts, its neat family trees, kinship charts, organizational flow diagrams, its too-well documented divine and archaic lineages, its convincing rituals and systematized meditational practices, its array of occult achievements.

The monastic community with its extensive hierarchies and its lineages of reincarnate lamas is the *greatest symbol* in Tibetan Buddhism. It is also the most dense and literal. Seldom is it seen symbolically, as a monumental imagining. Partisans of Tibetan Buddhism frequently seem blind to the dark side of this immense structure: to its oppressive and chaotic hierarchy, its historical justifications of gross inequalities of power, wealth and human dignity, its frequently tyrannical oppression of peasants, its grotesque systems of reward, justice and punishment, its smug sense of sanctity. But, on the other hand, critics of Tibetan Buddhist monasticism often ignore its achievements: its lofty ideals, the sense of order and meaning it bestows, its extraordinarily high levels of contemplation, meditation and scholarship, its widespread encouragement of peace and compassion.

A Partial Transportation

Tibetan Buddhism evolved, as has Buddhism everywhere, in the midst of a long-established traditional religion (Bon) and a bewil-

dering complexity of folk beliefs. It stands revealed in its fullness only against the backdrop of this more complete view of Tibetan spiritual life. Four broad categories of religious practitioner existed in old Tibet and still exist in cultures such as that of the Sherpas of Nepal (Paul, 1982, pp. 82–3; Von Furer-Haimendorf, 1964; Samuels, 1978). The category of monk covers a spectrum that ranges from the novice through to those who are fully ordained—'gelung' (Sherpa) and 'dge-slong' (Tibetan). Married lamas, more like parish priests, are simply called 'lamas' or 'ban-btsun' (Tibetan). Unlike the monk they own property and are involved in all forms of normal village life. Shamans rarely have any religious training at all and lie outside the organized religious system of Buddhism. Reincarnated lamas ('Tulku' in Sherpa, 'sprul-sku' in Tibetan) form a category which was seen in Chapter Four to cover three grades. Paul arranges these different categories of religious practitioners and their relationship to the source of spiritual energy in a tabular form (1982):

		ORIENTATION	
		This world	Other world
	Divine	Shaman	Reincarnate Lama
SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL ENERGY	Human	Married Lama	Monk

Both the shaman and the reincarnated high lama are imagined to be conduits that bring divine energy into the profane social world, whereas monks and married lamas are thought merely to acquire and handle the energy which has already come to earth. Their daily involvement with the lay community, and with such concerns as 'health, prosperity, the harvest, crime and social control', separates the shamans and married lamas from reincarnated high lamas and celibate monks. The majority of the latter two groups exist in the 'asexual, antisocial realm of the monastic system' (Paul, 1982). There is substantial evidence to show that this

broad religious structure is not as orderly as it seems and that considerable conflict and tension occur within it. Paul points out that 'celibate monasticism and, with it, the institution of high rein-carnate lamas as abbots' are recent innovations in some areas of the Himalayas. He continues, 'shamanism and the institution of married lamaism, while both dating back much longer, coexist with only an uneasy truce between them' (Paul, 1982, p. 86; Snell-grove, 1981, pp. 136–7). Conflict between married lamas in the village and segregated monks does not seem to be uncommon.

When Tibetan Buddhism came to the West, only a fraction of this religious structure, this social network of spiritual power, made the journey. In addition, some important cultural and imaginative shifts took place in the function of these spiritual specialists. Most importantly, neither the shaman nor the married lama in the sense of parish priest found a substantive place in the West. The function of Tibetan religious specialists in the West is overwhelmingly one of directing mystical training. The shaman's role, of diagnosing and curing illness, 'finding lost objects, iden-tifying malefactors, and casting magical spells both protective and destructive', is not found in the West, except perhaps on a very small scale among communities of exiled Tibetans (Paul, 1982, pp. 83–6). By comparison with the monastic system, the shaman and the married lama were involved in the rationally unsatisfac-tory chaos and triviality of everyday life.

This *partial* transportation to the West of a complex spiritual–cultural system has resulted in a critical imbalance. In its Western form, those practitioners, both inside and outside the organized religious system, who handled the daily matters of established social life are noticeably absent. Only the *specialists* who are mainly concerned with individual salvation and who are orientated away from the everyday world have become firmly and widely estab-lished in the West. This imbalance further facilitates the Western denial of Tibetan Buddhism's dark and messy aspects. Because the Western practitioners are only really encountering the pro-founder levels of monastic mysticism, and that too in an unacharac-teristically a-social form, it functions as a profound symbol of spiritual purity. The cultural shadow, so all-pervasive in one's own familiar religion, is pre-eminently lacking in such a case. The mo-nastic community presents itself as having a rationality, and an orderliness, characteristic of any bureaucratic organization. It seems to have its own internal logic based on a strict, straight-forward and highly codified set of rules. Of course, in the past the monasteries did not operate in such a perfect way, but to the

Western adept such an underside of bureaucratic power struggles and widespread ineptitude was left behind, unseen, in Tibet.[1]

The Spiritual Community

The community gathered around Tibetan Buddhism in the West is complex and has uncertain boundaries. But from my own experience of such communities, as an organizer and participant as well as an observer, I feel able to sketch some outlines. When the exiled lamas arrived in the West an imaginative place had long been prepared for them. As we have seen from previous chapters, Tibet was well established in the Western imagination. It exerted a tremendous attraction. Also, Buddhism, and Tibet's place in it, had become a part of a heated and complex debate—among scholars and practitioners alike. Eastern religious masters had already carved a bridgehead into the popular Western imagination by the time the first lama arrived in the 1960s. Many in the West were already convinced that they stood on the frontiers of a new Spiritual Renaissance, the Aquarian Age.

The Tibetan lamas promised authenticity, purity and a *direct* connection with the symbol of Tibet, with all its connotations of ancient wisdom teachings, a mystical science, an archaic transmission of divine energy, spiritual astronauts and so on. No longer was there any need to refer to remote and obscure 'masters' in the Himalayas as did Blavatsky. Here they were, on our doorstep: archetypes, root-metaphors of our cultural imagination, personified.

Formal communities based around Tibetan Buddhism vary widely. In many cases the small, alternative religious sect is well on the way to becoming established as a Church. Despite Buddhism's traditionally non-sectarian, united and peacefully co-existent public face, its establishment in the West has not occurred without its schisms, disputes and tensions. Some communities consist solely of the ordained individuals, the monks and nuns. There are also mixed communities of ordained and non-ordained practitioners. Both often try to emulate the traditional hierarchical monastic systems. Other, break-away, groups also exist. Some of these alternative groups have no ordained individuals, whilst others insist that monks and nuns do not wear any distinctive clothes such as robes. There are also idiosyncratic groups orientated towards a synthesis of esoteric ideas rather than just following orthodox Tibetan Buddhist practices. The more traditionally orientated

and hierarchically organized groups are by far the most prevalent and it is upon these that I will focus. These communities are composed of four distinct groups:

1. *The reincarnate lamas.* These provide the focal point of the organization although they may not be continuously present. It has often been said that the survival of Tibetan Buddhism, and Tibetan culture, rests with the future of the young reincarnated lamas. Consequently, much attention has been given to the education and care of these young tulkus (Fields, 1981, p. 277). These lamas are considered by their Western students to be literally the incarnate link with Absolute Reality. They are the final datum of authority and the ultimate guide as to the authentic and pure teachings of the Buddha. Also included in this group are ordinary Tibetan monks who rarely teach. They generally perform a variety of supportive tasks such as translating, caring for the reincarnated lama and so on.

2. *Western monks and nuns.* These range from novices to advanced students. This group includes both highly dedicated and deeply committed individuals, as well as those who are somewhat naive and in the first flush of enthusiasm. The bulk of everyday teaching and instruction seems to fall on the shoulders of this group. A number of these monks and nuns are also active in the outside world, frequently in the teaching and healing professions.

3. *Lay practitioners.* This group is large and is perhaps the most uniquely Western. In between work schedules, and by means of periodic retreats, these lay people sustain a high level of spiritual practice. Some work merely in order to support their formal meditational practice, whilst others are householders struggling to integrate such practices with family, study or work obligations. A special room, or just a corner of a room, will generally be set aside as a shrine and for their regular daily meditations. Some basic teaching of an instructional kind may be given by this group. In addition, they contribute extensively to matters of organization and administration, for example they may arrange for Tibetan lamas to visit and teach.

4. *Other interested lay persons.* The boundaries of this group are hard to define. There are those who attend meetings or weekly meditation sessions fairly regularly. They may otherwise barely sustain a consistent level of practice whether devotional, meditational or intellectual. At the furthest reaches are those who may visit the centre very occasionally, or who have an informal connection, perhaps a friend or relative who keeps them in touch. A

number of people may visit and draw upon help from the centre at a time of crisis. Some just make use of the books on Tibetan Buddhism, or its artefacts. Many people have been enriched by Tibetan Buddhism through a variety of different forms of contact. There are those whose trajectory has plunged quickly into its sphere of influence and then just as quickly left it; others gently brushed against it almost without knowing; for another it may have been a life-long obsession nagging away at a remote and unfulfilled corner of his or her mind. Others are glad the centre is there, just in case. It seems to provide a symbolic function for the alternative spiritual and therapeutic community.

The practices and techniques engaged in by monks, nuns and committed lay persons overlap considerably, yet an immense symbolic gap exists between ordained and un-ordained individuals. This gap has less to do with the rules of monastic discipline than with fantasies about the *authenticity* and *purity* of the Tibetan teachings, as well as fantasies about the uninterrupted authority of the reincarnated lineage of lamas.

Involvement with a Western Tibetan Buddhist group often begins with an instruction to reflect on the process by which one came to the Buddhist teachings. Sometimes this occurs as a solitary meditation, whilst sometimes it consists of group story-sharing. In each case it is designed to produce a sense of fortunate belonging. Indeed, even as early as Gampopa's systematization of the Tibetan teachings in the twelfth century, emphasis has been placed on such sustained reflection about the good fortune of having discovered Tibetan Buddhism. These reflections occupy a vital place in the preliminary practices (Gampopa, 1970; Rabten, 1974). The individual is encouraged to reflect upon his or her life and to see it as having been an inevitable journey towards this moment. This, more or less systematically directed, imaginative process reaches its greatest intensity with the decision about whether or not to take ordination.

In these groups, at a certain point of practice and commitment, the question is often less one of explaining why ordination has been chosen, than why it has *not*.[2] In the West, ordination is a symbol of authentic and serious practice. Even in the early nineteenth century, there was controversy in the West about who were the *true* Buddhists—the laity or the clergy? (Hodgson, 1972, pp. 68–9). This fantasy of the *authentic* and the *serious* practitioner is not confined to Buddhism. Even the early nineteenth-century controversy, mentioned above, was situated within an equivalent emotional debate that was occurring in England about ordination

and the true nature of Christianity. Similarly, in groups that gather around psychoanalysis or depth psychology, the *big* decision is generally whether or not to become a practising analyst.

Continuity of Transmission

As early as the 1930s, the Japanese Zen teacher Sokei-an had felt that 'the teaching could not be transmitted by laymen. Practised, yes, but not passed from one generation to the next' (Fields, 1981, pp. 180, 208–9, 221–2, 258). He also felt that Americans would not take a layman seriously as a Zen teacher. Others disagreed with him, but the controversy remains. Even in psychoanalytic circles, the unbroken analytic lineage stemming from Freud, Jung and other founders carries much weight. There is a general feeling that this analytical lineage is critical to the continuity and transmission of the teachings.[3] The debate in Western Tibetan Buddhism about the authenticity, continuity and transmission of the teachings is therefore not entirely idiosyncratic. It takes its place within a dilemma that confronts any highly organized and systematized approach to insight, wisdom, gnosis. However, the image of an unbroken transmission of wisdom is perhaps more central to Tibetan Buddhism than to any other psycho-spiritual or religious group, with the notable exception of Zen. The transmission of spiritual energy is symbolized in Tibetan Buddhism by the hierarchical system, or lineage, of reincarnated lamas.

In discussion with numerous Western monks and nuns, I have found that the decision to become ordained was invariably bound up with ideas of purity, authenticity and commitment. In addition, images of continuity emerge time and again. One major Tibetan Buddhist centre has gone on record as insisting: 'We believe that success and longevity of the Teachings depend on their being presented in the purity of their original form' (Fields, 1981, p. 308). The community of monks and nuns see their roles as those of *protecting* the 'purity' of the Tibetan Buddhist teachings and ensuring their transmission across time. As such, they become a part of the lineage's hierarchical order and system. Allegiance to the teaching means allegiance to the lineage of lamas.

Monastic Professionals

Images of the *professional*, the *expert* and the *technocrat* are often used to validate the hierarchical system of Tibetan Buddhism and

the distinction between ordained and lay practitioners. Such metaphors follow on naturally from the fantasy of Tibetan Buddhism as a vast storehouse of inner technology and science, an immense system of spiritual techniques. For example, it has been argued that the vast amount of Tibetan Buddhist teachings necessitates full-time professionals who are paid and supported to study and practice. Any move towards a diminution of hierarchy is often viewed with alarm, and as a potential disaster for the purity of the teachings. Fear is sometimes expressed about the preservation of the teachings, their orthodoxy, their volume, their continuity.

Such a view was expressed earlier this century by Pallis when he wrote, 'the chain is more important than any single link' (1946, p. 274). Pallis's image of a chain has been replaced by that of information management; Maraini's 1950s comment about 'industrialists' has been superseded by images of professionals, technocrats and managers; the 'library', 'museum' and 'storehouse' have increasingly yielded to metaphors drawn from information management (Maraini, 1952, p. 172). Fantasies about the immense *quantity* of information, about storage, access, retrieval, about order, systems, experts and efficiency are now to the fore, particularly when it comes to concern about translation. Translation is an extraordinarily important link in any fantasy about continuity, purity and *authentic* teachings. Correct translations are considered to anchor the range of possible interpretations. They help to fix the readings. Emphasis is placed on a kind of grammatical exactitude and philosophical precision. For some scholars, all problems will be resolved by a dedicated order of full-time professionals having complete access to the totality of the pure Tibetan texts.

Such professional control is frequently viewed as the only possible way in which the continuity of a vast tradition of wisdom and knowledge can be sustained over great spans of time. But the hidden curriculum of the Buddhist pedagogical system is ignored. Little consideration is given to the implications of Tibetan Buddhism adopting the organizational forms and metaphors peculiar to advanced capitalist society. Monastic Tibetan Buddhism evolved within a feudal, aristocratic milieu. Even in that form it probably only reached its full flowering about four hundred years ago with the Fifth and Sixth Dalai Lamas. Marin, in his biting critique of the Naropa Institute in America, argues that the Western organization of Tibetan Buddhism 'embodies a feudal, priestly tradition transplanted to a capitalist setting. The attraction it has for its adherents is oddly reminiscent of the attraction the aristocracy had for the rising middle class in the early days of capitalistic expansion' (1979;

Butler, 1991). This feudal tradition is now in an industrial culture which is undergoing a profound crisis in its ultimate values, in its spiritual guidance and in its belief in social meaningfulness. In this context it is significant that the structure of Tibetan Buddhism is frequently envisaged conservatively, either in terms of a trans-planted élite, a priestly class, or as a system of professional experts and information managers.

The Living Gods and the Hidden Curriculum

At the heart of this spiritual system are the reincarnated high lamas, the Rinpoches. The Tibetan Rinpoche is presented as being beyond critique. The ordinary Western devotee does not presume to criticize, only to struggle to understand. Whilst such an attitude is common in a Guru–student relationship, Tibetan Buddhism goes one step further. As the Western Buddhist-traveller Pallis was told many years ago in Tibet, even if the lama has glaring personal faults these are 'not supposed to impair the authority of his teaching for the disciple, or to diminish the latter's obedience and devotion to the Master . . .' (Pallis, 1946, p. 274). The Master–pupil relationship in this spiritual tradition is considered to be something which transcends the actual personalities concerned. Respect must always be shown to the *system* of spiritual continuity. The position, and not necessarily the person, commands obedi-ence and devotion. Tibetan Buddhism has also evolved safeguards to prevent the erosion of such system-worship. Even if the lama is glaringly deficient in monastic purity, as was for example the Sixth Dalai Lama with his erotic love poetry and regular visits to Lhasa's brothels, such behaviour must not be taken at face value. The adept is told that such actions 'may be planned to try your faith, or from some other motive judged in reference to standards far removed from yours or mine' (Pallis, 1946, p. 321; Marin, 1979). Finally, it is emphasized that to criticize a lama, or the teachings, lineage and system is a grave fault. Indeed in old Tibet is was also a great sin and a crime.

Such an unquestioningly worshipful attitude towards the lama is actively encouraged in Western groups. For example, the Tibet-ans brought with them in exile the ritualistic and ceremonial lan-guage of the feudal court. Words such as 'bounteous', 'precious', 'sublime', 'exhalted', 'profound', 'joyous', etc. abound in texts and commentaries, and are often adopted by Westerners in a style of exaggerated piety and formal respect. Western travellers, in the

past, often commented upon this florid language of Tibetan court life. Its use is ceremonial and it strictly delineates the boundaries between two imaginative worlds. This court language complements the rich monastic costumes and extensive rituals, to set apart a well-defined aristocratic fantasy from the confusions and coarseness of daily life. The language of the court is indirect, predictable, flattering, hierarchical and ornate. Everything is designed to create an imaginative gulf between the lamas and everyone else. They are considered to be fully-realized beings, the Masters who stand on the farthest shore. They *are* Absolute Truth. For example, any suggestion that Tibetan Rinpoches might lack worldly experience in the West (in sexual relations, careers, political action, ecological problems etc.) and can therefore only give the most general advice on these matters is invariably greeted with a reply such as: 'but he is enlightened and an enlightened being has full omniscience'. The following conversations are typical of many that I have heard at teachings by Tibetan lamas:

NEWCOMER: He [the lama] didn't really say anything.
REGULAR: No, it's us that have to listen in another way.
NEWCOMER: But he just repeated the same thing.
REGULAR: That's because we have so many blocks he is trying to get through.

Or another:

REGULAR: Did you enjoy the teaching?
NEWCOMER: Not particularly.
REGULAR: You came with expectations. When these don't work out as you expect then you get angry or disappointed.

Paradoxically, such a belief-system is espoused side by side with the injunction not to believe anything one is told but to test it out; to base one's knowledge on experience and not on faith (Pallis, 1946, p. 274). Time and again in books or in lectures it is said that Buddhism is true because it is based on empirical experience. Indeed, this is one of the foundations of Buddhism. Nevertheless it is *an ideal* and not a commonplace practice. Within the communities of Westerners practising Tibetan Buddhism, the *whole structure* proclaims a particular truth prior to any investigation. In addition, many of the basic techniques are pseudo-scientific. Frequently they are not rational exercises at all but enactments between the individual and deep cultural fantasies (Butler, 1991).

When the lama says or does something which blatantly does not

fit into this well-prepared scenario, one will invariably be told that he is testing one's faith (Pallis, 1946, p. 321). There is a kind of Orwellian double-think in all of this. One is told that one's faith is being tested, yet in the same breath assured that Buddhism does not rely on faith, that Buddhism has value because it is grounded on empirical and verifiable aspects of consciousness and experience. Yet, the instructions and actions of the lama must be believed because they refer to planes of reality beyond our comprehension, etc. etc. . . .

Despite *explicit* injunctions by high lamas, even the Dalai Lama, to not just accept their word but to test out the teachings through experience, *implicitly* the teachings are in the form of a closed system. The individual is left to find the missing answers which are known by the master. Of course, in theory the situation should not be like this. Also, it could be argued that this is a mistake which is made by many individuals in the early stages of practice. However, this study is not primarily concerned either with what *should* happen, nor with a small élite, but with what *does* happen among the wider community of those interested in Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetan system itself must take some responsibility for this mistake, and for the attitude of uncritical belief. For example, it uses metaphors of spiritual hygiene which encourage dependence (e.g. 'if you are sick you go to the physician and get a prescription, so why not do so on the spiritual level').[4] Also, the claim of omniscience, inherent by definition in any reincarnated lama, plus the densely codified iconographic and ritualistic displays create a myth of infallibility and omnipotence. At best they produce a form of benign paternalism.[5]

In other words, such things are not mistaken views of the spiritual path, but are inherent in the dialogue between the Tibetan Buddhist system and the West. Psychological understanding of the relationship between student and teacher is obscured. The power of both reason and the imagination is diluted or, in the most extreme cases, paralysed. Jung wrote about this situation, with a measured irony: 'The disciple is unworthy: modestly he sits at the Master's feet and guards against having ideas of his own . . . [and] can at least bask in the sun of a semi-divine being . . .' (CW 7, para. 263).

From one perspective, the teacher and the entire system of Tibetan Buddhism are themselves a grand technique. They are all part of the play of the imagination. But what kind of imaginative statement is being expressed by Tibetan Buddhism as a *system,* as an inner network of omniscient high lamas who are believed to

be the direct incarnation of divinity itself? This system is popu-
lated in its most strategic places, not by mere representatives of
the enlightened mind but by its actual personifications: demi-gods
in human form. Whatever this system thinks, imagines, says, does,
asks or orders is believed to be absolutely correct.

Quite clearly, for many Western Tibetan Buddhists, we are
living in the foothills of the cosmic mountain—Olympus, or
Meru. We are in the direct presence of a community of gods
and their closest attendants. The Dalai Lama *is* Chenrezig (the
Bodhisattva of Compassion), the Panchen Lama *is* Amitabha
and so on. Here in our midst is a living pantheon, a truly
archetypal realm. It would be as if the Pope were believed to
be Christ and the ecclesiastical hierarchy were believed to be
the disciples reincarnated. Of course, this face of awesome
power was seldom fully mobilized and Tibetan Buddhism has
other faces besides this one of spiritual totalitarianism. One can
only feel relief that such a script was seldom enacted in full
and that many of the key players seemed as bewildered and
confused by it all as anybody else. But this awe-inspiring drama
resonates through every detail of ritual, every nuance of eti-
quette, every philosophical categorization, every iconographic
systematization, every ontological pronouncement.[6]

In the West, the difficult struggle over the place of the teacher—
Guru, Lama, Rinpoche—is pivotal to the acceptance of Eastern
spiritual ideas (Trungpa, 1976). In an attempt to meet the chal-
lenge of the Guru, other images have been pressed into service—
guide, doctor, shaman. But the most common move is into psy-
chology and into envisaging the Guru as therapist (Coukoulis,
1976). We must pay particular attention to these metaphors and
to their place in the social fantasy of the contemporary industrial
world. There is a history behind these most recent attempts to
imagine the Eastern teacher and to assign him or her a place in
the imaginative landscape of the West. For example, nineteenth-
century Europeans consistently referred to Tibetan Buddhism
as 'Lamaism'. This was a derogatory label used to underline its
departure and decline from so-called pure Buddhism and also to
emphasize the totalitarian power of its élite. As was seen in Chap-
ter Two, to imagine the lamas in such a way revealed as much
about the hopes and fears of these travellers as about the nature
of the lamas. The contemporary use of 'doctor' or 'therapist' is no
less revealing. On an imaginative level these metaphors are rich,
but when taken literally they are insidious. Certainly it is some-
what naïve to insist, as is often done, that the West's reluctance to

unquestioningly embrace the fantasy of the omniscient teacher merely reveals its psychological and spiritual immaturity. Literalizing the lama's power can create a figure of omniscience which seems to transcend both imagination and critical reflection. The imagination becomes paralysed in the direct presence of a god.

7—Images of Spiritual Transmission

'Unless one's *Guru* be of an unbroken (apostolic) line, what gain is it to take Initiation?'

(Evans-Wentz, 1972, p. 262)

Spiritual transmission is the most profound and paradoxical idea to be found in all mystical traditions. But what is it? What actually is transmitted? Is there anyone who transmits or who receives? Is there really any transmission? The paradoxes are as varied as the images evoked. For example, the substance or content of transmission has been described in terms of various energies (bio-, occult, chi-), or as vibrations, powers, rays, winds, alchemical substances, wisdom, insight, mind and knowledge. Even within similar spiritual traditions the metaphors associated with the *process* of transmission can vary quite markedly. For example, with Buddhism, Zen and Vajrayāna each emphasizes profoundly different images. In the readily available translations and commentaries of Zen are images of spontaneity, simplicity, everydayness and paradoxical elusiveness. I would almost call this mercurial quality *the* distinguishing characteristic of Zen as a fantasy in the West. While Tibetan Buddhism (Vajrayāna) also acknowledges such a trickster-like image, especially in its Mahāmudrā meditations, it tends to emphasize instead a process of relentless continuity from lama to lama. Of course, the lineage of teachers is also a vital part of Zen, but it is quieter than in Vajrayāna and stays in the background in Western literature (Blofeld, 1974, pp. 28, 134). The dominant images of transmission in Tibetan Buddhism are akin to power grids, to lines of spiritual energy criss-crossing and dominating the social world. The Zen Master is usually portrayed as a divine spark whilst the Tibetan lama is a divine conduit. Evans-Wentz imagined the lama as a Promethean fire-bearer heroically bringing heavenly light to Earth. He continued, 'As from mighty broadcasting stations, dynamically charged with thought forces, the

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Great-Ones broadcast over the Earth that Vital Spirituality which alone makes human evolution possible . . .' (1972, pp. 10, 18). The most characteristic feature of Tibetan Buddhism as a Western fantasy must surely be its monastic lineages of reincarnated lamas through which the omniscient energy of the Awakened Mind is channelled, stored, and made available to sentient life on Earth.

One of the clearest and richest imaginative statements about transmission in Tibetan Buddhism is that of the Lineage—or Refuge-Tree. Most of the themes already discussed converge and intersect in this Tibetan icon (tanka). An example of it can be found within Rumtek Monastery in the Himalayan State of Sikkim, the residence of the late H. H. Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, the sixteenth incarnation of Karmapa. It belongs to the Karma-Kargyud-pa sect of Tibetan Buddhism.[1] This picture consists of groupings of deities and historical figures in specific locations around the unifying image of a tree. The tree grows from the centre of a lake. Clustered around the tree trunk are the Guardian Protectors. Generally these are wrathful figures such as Mahākalā, surrounded by flames with gruesome ornaments and dancing on corpses of their victims. Above are four branches. Grouped on the front branch are the Yidams or tutelary deities who are the personal guardians of the meditators. On the right branch are various manifestations of the Buddha which can be imagined as referring to aspects of *potential* energy. On the rear branch are sacred texts and on the left branch are the Bodhisattvas or aspects of *active* energy. Towering above these, on the central trunk, are the historical lamas or teachers of the Kargyud-pa lineage, plus the historical Siddhis or yogis. Dominating the centre of the tree is the deity Dorje Chang (in Tibetan) or Vajradhāra (in Sanskrit) who reappears at the top of the tree. This meditational tanka or icon is one of the first to be encountered by would-be adepts of the Karma Kargyud-pa Vajrayāna lineage. The associated meditation involves visualizing the tree, and reciting both prayers and a long mantra of refuge. It also involves mindfully completing one hundred and eight thousand full-length prostrations, where the student slides him- or herself from the standing position into a complete horizontal contact with the floor and then returns to the standing posture (Blofeld, 1970).

Buddhism and the Language of Imagination

One is immediately struck by the sense of organization expressed by this complex icon. This powerful impression of order and sys-

Dorje Chang (Vajradhāra)	The Cosmic Buddha
Tilopa (988–1069)	Indian Siddha
Nāropa (1016–1100)	Indian Siddha
Marpa (1012–1097)	Farmer and Translator
Milarepa (1052–1135)	Recluse and Poet
Gampopa (1079–1153)	Monk and Scholar
Dusum Khyenpa (1110–1193)	First Karmapa incarnation

The Top of the Lineage Tree:

The Transmission

tem created by the Lineage Tree contrasts strongly with the apparent chaos of the Tibetan pantheon. Waddell, writing at the turn of the century, called the Tibetan gods a 'bizarre crowd', 'jostling' for position on 'the stage' (1972, pp. 324–8). He expressed an inability 'to give any satisfactory classification of such

a disorderly mob'. Earlier in the nineteenth century, Hodgson called the Tibetan pantheon 'an immense, and for the most part useless, host' (1972, pp. 26–7). Despite such comments, Tibetan monasticism has attempted to create images of an orderly, systematic continuity of power and spiritual wisdom. But the calm certainty of the Lineage Tree, with its procession of reincarnations, is always under the threat of being swamped by the plenitude of deities, spirits and numerous other manifestations of folk belief.

Why are these images and deities grouped and organized in this way? What is the significance of the *tree* as a central motif? First, I want to draw attention to the place of imaginative language within the Buddhist tantric tradition, and the reliance of such a language upon images and symbols. In the use of mantras (words), mudras (gestures) and mandalas (images) there is an attempt to awaken and to educate the depth imagination. It has been the task of esoteric language through the ages, whether religious, occult or hermetic, to transform and re-educate cognition. The symbol calls for a response and a comment. It cannot be ignored. Riddles, koans, and other forms of paradox, are also commonly used to block the rational mind, and hence to force the intuitive, the imaginative leap. There is also the via-negativa, the way of negation, in the Christian *Cloud of Unknowing* and in the Buddhist *Heart Sutra,* which exhausts the assumptions and speculations of the rational mind (Chang, 1972; Happold, 1963).

Another example of the special power and place of imaginative description can be seen when we compare the more *mythic* accounts of altered states of consciousness with much of the recent *rational* psychological work in that area. The rational–scientific descriptions of altered states of consciousness abound in abbreviations—for example, there are 'ASCs', and 'BPM 1, 2, 3, 4' (Tart, 1972; Grof, 1976). This style of nomenclature can also be found in ancient religious traditions such as Buddhism, where meditative absorption levels are known as first Jhāna, second Jhāna, etc. On the other hand, the mythic or imaginative perspective creates landscapes and populates these realms with deities and heroes. Instead of *abstract* levels and categories, we find kinship disputes, marriages, wars, long involved histories of struggles, dominance, subjugation and harmony. These altered states of consciousness and altered worlds of consciousness, such as the Buddhist Pure Lands, suggest a certain grandeur and autonomy. They are not neatly categorized, nor can they be reviewed in an aloof and detached manner. They are ancient lands which seem to exert a compulsion over us. So, for example, an immense cosmic tapestry

is unraveled in Mahāyāna Buddhist texts (Jung, *CW* 11, para. 908 ff.). There are innumerable Buddhas and Bodhisattvas each of whom preside over their own 'Buddha-Field' or 'Pure Land'. Śāky-amuni, for example, is associated with Vulture's Peak; Chenrezig is associated with Dewachen; Akṣobhya, the Imperturbable, presides over the Pure Land of Abhirati, the land of exceeding great delight which is found in the East. Amitābha's Pure Land is Sukhā-vatī, the happy land, and is found in the West, in the direction of the setting sun. According to traditional Tibetan cosmology, we are situated in the world continent of Jambudvipa (Island of the Rose-Apple Tree). In Vajrayāna the adept visualizes the cosmos as a mandala. In the centre is the cosmic axis, Mount Meru. Around this axis are four continents. Quite clearly this cosmological pattern is repeated in the Lineage Tree and the presence of the various Buddhas and Bodhisattvas on the tree also implies the presence of their Pure Lands. Imaginative language seems to be overwhelmingly place-oriented, and so imaginative cognition basically becomes a process of mapping. This kind of thinking is less concerned with causes than with patterns and relationships.

Another place in Buddhism where imaginative language is to be found, is in the use of the dohās, or tantric poetry. The Siddha Saraha is the most well-known composer of dohās. In the story of Saraha's life it is recounted how this Indian Siddha was sent out to find an arrowsmith woman. When he found this woman, she told him, 'My dear young man, the Buddha's meaning can be known through symbols and actions, not through words and books' (Guenther, 1969, p. 5). Saraha is positioned on the Lineage Tree in an important place among the Siddhas, or early forerunners of the Kargyu Tradition, who stem from the mythological founder Dorje Chang.

Guenther has made some important comments on the use of language in the dohās. He writes that the poem or song is not only 'the realisation in its medium of language (or music) of the experience', it becomes equally 'the point of departure into fancy and reflection on the part of the audience'. The image exists in its own right; it is felt immediately, it invites us to explore the depths; it does not represent anything else (Guenther, 1969, pp. 23–4; 1968; Elder, 1976; Ardussi, 1977).

Whilst commenting on Saraha's poetry, Guenther writes that 'another kind of language is needed . . . to avoid the concretising of inner processes into permanent externalised facts' (1969, pp. 5–26). The key word here is 'concretising'. The Dalai Lama, in talks given in 1982 in Melbourne, said that the purpose of mantra

work and its associated practices is to overcome the sense that ourselves and the world are 'ordinary'. In other words, the purpose is to de-literalize the world. It is a process of an *opus contra naturam,* a work against the taken-for-grantedness of things. It is the attempt to see the world and ourselves as extra-ordinary, as fantasies in the fullest sense, as parts in the play of illusion. In particular there is the need to gain imaginative depth. There have been many warnings in spiritual literature between a true and false imagination (Corbin, 1969, pp. 179 ff.). The false is described as personalistic, subjective and superficial, whilst true imagination refers to a transpersonal, transcendental form of cognition.

Because of Frances Yates's brilliant work at the Warburg School in London, we are now aware of the extent and influence of an *art* of organizing, evoking and educating the depth imagination, the memory, throughout Western history (1978; 1979; Gombrich, 1978, pp. 136 ff.; Douglas, 1974, p. 34). This depth imagination, or memory, was conceived in the Platonic sense of a-priori images and truths. It seems to be particularly appropriate to use the art-of-memory paradigm, because it approaches the Lineage Tree from *within* its own terrain—that of the imagination. Not only does this provide us with a valuable model, it also establishes a connection between Tibetan and Western esoteric spiritual practices. It also raises crucial questions about the significance of *organized* displays of religious imagery.

Frances Yates has shown that this *art* of memory was a technique used from classical times through the medieval period and the Renaissance, for organizing the memory or the imagination. Yates gives many details of how both the imagination and encyclopaedic empirical knowledge were placed within an imaginary structure. This method for storing, organizing and retrieving both secular and spiritual information was, of course, crucial in any society which was either pre-literate, or where books were scarce.

Sometimes the art of memory was simply used to aid the accumulation and memorization of facts, but in the hands of spiritual figures such as Raymond Lull, Camillo, Albertus Magnus, and Bruno, it was used to deepen wisdom and insight. 'An inner temple of fantasy' had to be constructed first (Hillman, 1977, pp. 91–5). Sometimes this was done by memorizing a real building of suitable proportions, such as an old church, or else an imaginary building or landscape was created.

Frequently an object such as a tree, a ladder, or a wheel was used: *anything which had discrete but structurally related places.* Infor-

mation in the form of images was then located on these places. As Yates points out, mythological deities and other figures were classically used for organizing the imagination. So, the Tibetan deities are in themselves miniature 'memory devices'. With their complex gestures, weapons, adornments and so on, each deity is a small self-contained map of the imagination. Unlike contemporary information-storage systems, the content and the system were interrelated. So the structural form was not just a nominal one, but had symbolic significance in itself.[2]

Gods and heroes of classical Greece, or signs of the zodiac were often used as the universal principles of this system. They were the *imaginative categories*. Hillman writes, 'These personified Universals had a visual attractive power: they were evocative living beings who synthesised the contents of the imagination . . .' (1978, p. 179). These images were seen as basic categories of the imagination, around which were organized various related discourses.[3] By asking 'where' rather than 'how' or 'why', the art of memory opened up space or interiority. So, in the early Renaissance, human memory was envisaged to be an 'inner' treasure house or theatre.

The similitudes within each grouping would be based on appearance (e.g. red and anger), related functions (e.g. an anchor and maritime affairs), sounds etc. Essential to the recollection process was distortion, or the use of bizarre images. It was the capacity of the bizarre, or the grotesque, to reach particular depths of memory which rendered them absolutely necessary for the purpose of exploring and organizing the imaginative field. We remember and are most *moved* by the extraordinary or bizarre. This provides another perspective on the extensive use of wrathful imagery in Tibetan Buddhism. Not only does the wrathful image complement the peaceful in the essential ambivalence of the deity, but it also encourages and allows the exploration of imaginative regions which would otherwise be extraordinarily difficult to reach. As the Buddha recognized in his sermon on dukkha (suffering), we are drawn to the depths of insight through pathology.

The Lineage Tree as a Memory System

I want to consider the Lineage Tree to be a memory system. This icon has a basic five-fold structure which is fundamental to the Vajrayāna. There is a constant repetition of this five-fold structure throughout Vajrayāna from the smallest details of the Vajra or Diamond Sceptre to the large designs of the mandalas. This four-,

or five-fold, pattern is repeated with the four branches and the central trunk of the Lineage Tree. The Meditation Buddhas are then grouped within this overall pattern on one of the branches. The tree is therefore a structurally organized array of places, and in particular it utilizes bold and memorable images.

In the traditional art of memory, the meaning of an image was dependent on *where* it was placed. This placing altered the image's relation to other images, and changed its meaning within the overall structure. However, the basic theme of the image remained unchanged (Yates, 1978, p. 146). We can see this to be the case in the Lineage Tree. For example, the position on the tree profoundly modifies a deity's or image's role. So interpenetration and overlapping occurs as some deities are at one and the same time Protectors, Yidams, or Bodhisattvas (e.g. Mahākāla as Protector or Yidam; Manjushrī as Yidam or Bodhisattva). This idea of interchangeability has long been recognized and systematically explored in Buddhist psychology (Chang, 1972). This theme is also treated in that other memory system, the Cabalistic Tree of Life where it is sometimes written that each sephiroth contains within it ten lights, and each light another ten and so on, *ad infinitum*.

The Tree: Process and Organization

This example from Tibet also draws our attention to the motif of the *tree* as a memory device. The tree is a frequent image in religion and its symbolism has been extensively discussed. But there is very little analysis of its role in *organizing* imagery. In fact, apart from the brief mention by Yates, the tree motif has generally been treated as a *single* symbolic image rather than as a *system* for organizing a number of symbols. Yates refers to Raymond Lull's extensive use, in the thirteenth century, of diagrams in the form of trees. She writes that 'The tree as he uses it, is a kind of place system . . . But there are no "striking" images . . . Their branches and leaves are decorated only with abstract formulae and classifications' (1978, p. 187). Unlike Lull's trees, the Kargyud-pa Lineage Tree has a full range of striking and bizarre images.

The use of the tree, for example, is very different to that other well-known organization of images, the mandala. The circular or symmetrical mandala surely emphasizes completion and the idea of the centre. The tree, however, presents an image of growth, and of the *process* towards wholeness (Jung, *CW* 13, para. 304).

The Buddha's awakening beneath the Bodhi tree has resulted in a close relationship between both from the very beginning. For

example, on the bas-reliefs at Sānchī, the place of Śākyamuni is taken by various symbols. The enlightenment scene shows worshippers paying homage to the tree under which enlightenment was attained. The relationship between the tree, Buddha, practice and awakening is clear, although the tree presumably represents only one aspect of this, i.e. that moment when the practice, or process, culminates in fulfilment. In some early Buddhist texts, it is the Bodhi tree, not the Buddha, which is called the Great Awakener.

The unifying aspect of the *process* is depicted by the 'deity' Vajradhāra (Dorje Chang) who occupies both the central point of the tree with its four branches, as well as reappearing at the very crown of the historical transmission lineage. Here is, therefore, a suggestion of the movement to and from the same divine image. This echoes the shamanistic ascent and descent into the unconscious. Eliade points out that in shamanism it is a common belief that the world ruler lives at the top of the tree (1974, p. 70).

The tree is also, of course, the *axis mundi*, the axis of the world. It is therefore pivotal to cosmological order. In addition, on an esoteric level, the tree is a chart of the chakras, or subtle energy centres, as well as nadis, or channels of psychic energy. In this sense the tree is a preparation for the complex visualizations to be found in the advanced yogic exercises formulated by Nāropa.

In mythic, spiritual and occult literature, trees are frequently guarded, either by rings of fire or by dragons and demons, or in this Tibetan example, by both. Jung suggests that the growth to Self, indicated by the tree, is a natural process and it is dangerous either to risk disturbing it, or to force the pace by the use of spiritual exercises. I have often heard it commented that it is better not to begin the Vajrayāna path than to begin and then want to stop; also that the deepest Hell-Realms are reserved for failed adepts. The demonic forces are guarding this process but they will also give protection to the adept 'providing that he summons up courage enough to climb into the tree despite its guardian' (Jung, CW 13, para. 256). These guardians of the boundary are protecting the adept from the power of the experience but also the spiritual secrets from the crass gaze of the uninitiated.

Patterns of Transmission

Six different modes of transmitting spiritual wisdom-energy are illustrated by the Lineage Tree (see diagram).

1.   At the top of the tree is shown an original handing down of wisdom-energy from the non-human, divine realm (represented by Dorje Chang), to the human and worldly realm (represented by the Indian ascetic, Tilopa). Wisdom-energy is imagined to have its source in the a-historical, archetypal realms and to only subsequently enter the world of historical time and impermanence. Evans-Wentz wrote in 1928 that Dorje Chang is 'A Tantric personification of the Saving Power which alone makes possible the attainment of Enlightenment or *Buddhahood*. Herein this Power is expressed through the Divine Person of Dorje Chang and thence through His Initiates incarnate on Earth' (1972, p. xxiii).[4]

2.   Below this cosmic drama is a fundamental movement expressing the staple process of all mystic traditions: the passage of wisdom-energy from teacher to student. Wisdom-energy has found a way of moving through time. It is a precarious passage, relying on a uniquely individual and human encounter. Amid the immense flux of space and time, a profoundly human relationship has to be established and an intense, educative process begun, sustained and completed. Individuals are frail, they live for such a short and unpredictable time. The successful teacher–student relationship is inevitably imagined as heroic. This relationship from Tilopa to his student Nāropa, from Nāropa to the married farmer Marpa, from Marpa to the ex-practitioner of black magic Milarepa, is one of the great mystical dramas of the world (Evans-Wentz, 1972: Guenther, 1971).[5]

3.   The next imaginative movement, from Milarepa to his student Gampopa, is crucial. Although Marpa is credited with founding the monastic Kadampa sect, Gampopa is pictured as the tradition's first great systematizer. A process of intense regularization has been initiated. The passage of wisdom-energy has been given an apparently more reliable and organized vessel than random teacher–student relationships (Guenther, 1972).

4.   The shift from Gampopa to Dusum Khyenpa is small but dramatic. Gampopa's red hat is replaced by a black one and we have entered the world of the Karmapa (White, 1976). It is a decisive moment for the imagination of Tibetan Buddhism. The black-hatted Dusum Khyenpa ('whoever sees the black-hat ceremony is assured salvation after death') is the first Karmapa, the first incarnate high lama of Tibet (1110–93). The teacher–student relation is relegated to second place. The Karmapa's teachers, after Gampopa, are not shown on the Lineage Tree. From Karmapa is the passage of the same enlightened being. It is a continuity of the same individual who has chosen to reincarnate for the

sake of all sentient life. In one sense we have once again left the human world and time has been suspended. At this point on the Lineage Tree, transmission is imagined as occurring within an almost bureaucratically regimented monastic organization. The previous *vertical* images of a handing-down and a handing-on of wisdom-energy are replaced by a horizontal one of remorseless continuity. Individual stories receed into the background, becoming flattened by the weight of monastic formality into bland hegiographies. Evans-Wentz commented:

> Gampopa is the fifth of the Great *Gurus* who took upon themselves human form for the good of the many . . . who, so the modern Kargyutpas believe, still confers upon the Brotherhood on Earth spiritual benediction, telepathically transmitted in 'waves of grace', direct from the Heaven-World where He reigns. (1972, p. xxvi)

An image of human struggle for spiritual awakening is replaced by one of an already omniscient mind choosing to go through the motions of incarnation in human form out of compassion for sentient beings. Milarepa's attainments are channelled into, and become enshrined into, a dense architecture of transmission. No wonder that Evans-Wentz, perhaps unwittingly, refers to the 'unbroken Kargyutpa *Dynasty* of Teachers' (1972, pp. xxvi, 309).[6]

The strength of this image lies in the fantasy of an *unbroken* transmission. Time and again in Western commentaries it is this unbroken aspect which is emphasized. Marco Pallis, a few years after Evans-Wentz, wrote that the actual personalities and the details in the chain of transmission are of little importance, just so long as the continuity is not broken because of them (1946, p. 274). Durability and reliability become more important than inspired innovation.

6. The final movement of transmission is from the tree to the humans and other sentient life gathered at its base. But what an immense gulf lies between them. A bare trunk soars above; ferocious protectors guard the higher reaches of the tree which are hung with the images of a vast celestial pageant. This awesome display of divinely and historically legitimated monastic authority contrasts strongly with the confused throng of ignorant sentient life crowded around the base of the tree. The gap between these worlds is vast, yet they are still connected. This divine tree is clearly growing from the same world as the one in which the humans have their feet. But the attitude of these mundane sentient creatures is one of salutation, of praise and awe. It is therefore not

the *connection* between divinity and human life that is being emphasized in this icon, but its *difference.*

If we look closely at the sentient life gathered at the base of the tree, we can clearly see images of lesser monks and others who practise the Buddhist Teachings. Evans-Wentz's comments develop this image:

> Each little community of these Himalayan mystics has its own *Guru*, subordinate to the Apostolic *Guru*, the Head of the sect, who in turn is subject to the Celestial line of *Gurus*, and these in order of hierarchical rank, are subject to the Supreme *Guru*, the Buddha Dorje Chang (Vajra-Dhara). As electricity may be passed on from one receiving station to another, so, the Kargyutpas maintain, is the Divine Grace . . . transmitted through the Buddha Dorje Chang (Vajra-Dhara) to the Line of Celestial *Gurus* and thence to the Apostolic *Guru* on Earth, and, from him, to each of the subordinate *qurus*, and, by them, through the Mystic Initiation, to each of the neophytes. (1972, p. 9)

The celestial beings and spiritual heroes on the tree, when contrasted with the creatures at the base, form parallel and coexisting levels of reality. This is less an image of transmission than a statement of difference. Between them they provide an image of *tension*, of the intense 'charge' of transmission, of the steep, almost absolute gradient from the mundane to the supra-mundane.

The six modes of transmission are concerned with movement, connection, flow. In them we find a complex, yet well-ordered interplay between the human and divine, between historical time and timelessness, between teachers and students, between successive monastic incarnations of an identical individual mind. Evans-Wentz sketches quite clearly, although in somewhat dated spiritual language, the essential image of Tibetan Buddhism. This idealized image of hierarchical order, where everything is evaluated, certified and allotted a specific place according to the grade of attainment, where control, monitoring and authorization is absolute, is the root-metaphor of Tibetan Buddhism.

It may be argued that so much energy and work is directed to sustaining, protecting and symbolizing this image of continuity because the unbroken passage of wisdom is the sole *raison d'être* of any mystical tradition. It might also be argued that this *particular* image—massive, unyielding, regimented—is nothing more than a technique, perhaps the ultimate pedagogical device of Tibetan Buddhism. Certainly the whole of this study supports such conclusions, however, we need to go deeper into its particular qualities as a symbol.

Structured Symbolism

The Tibetan Lineage Tree and its associated practices portray the *structured* use of *deliberate* and systematized images for triggering imaginative associations. But why structure and group images and deities at all? What kind of fantasy is it that perceives in terms of organization, integration and preferred positioning of deities?

Frances Yates, in her study, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, documents attempts by Christian philosophers to subsume and integrate, for example, the Cabala and the hermetic sciences, into the theology of the Church. Thus, instead of providing the imagination with a variety of perspectives, the multiple viewings were seen as enhancing the *one* view, that of the coming of Christ, and the truth of the Christian teachings. It has been called 'taking each thought prisoner for Christ'. Bruno was one of the few who sensed the danger of this move towards a monotheistic religious hegemony (Yates, 1978). In our own era, for example, there is a similar tendency towards the incorporation of Jung's work into providing an apparent confirmation of existing Christian theology and philosophy (Hillman, 1971, p. 99). It is therefore important to notice whether the organization of the imagery is unified, loose, tight or centralized. What part is played by hierarchical arrangement, especially as indicated by spacial locations—up, down, left, right, centre and so on? The gathering together of apparently diverse imagery into a unified whole for the specific purpose of establishing a monotheistic truth needs to be carefully analysed. Such considerations are critical for an examination of a memory system such as the Kargyud-pa Lineage Tree.

The Lineage Tree is not a map of a generalized field of the psyche or imagination. The groupings have been arranged for at least one definitive purpose—liberation or transcendence. Like all Buddhist psychology it is almost a route map (Govinda, 1973, p. 35; Narada, 1975, p. iii). It has been said of Buddhist Tantra, in its favour, that it absorbs and utilizes local folk religions and cults. Hence the presence on the Lineage Tree of old Bon-po deities as Protectors supporting Buddha-Dharma parallels the monotheistic gathering outlined above in the case of Christianity.[7] Similarly, Tucci mentions that subsequent to some delicate negotiations with the Mongols, who were threatening Tibet's borders in the late sixteenth century, Genghis Khan and some Shamanic deities became absorbed into the Buddhist pantheon as protectors (1967). Especially noticeable in the Tibetan case is the *devaluing* of other traditions. For example, Yamantaka, an important Yidam, is

shown trampling Brahma and Vishnu underfoot. Obviously a symbolic meaning is being hinted at but one cannot help wondering why Hindu gods should be used for this purpose. Similarly we would also have to note the radical de-Indianization of the Siddhas and other forerunners of the lineage. Sierksma, in a scathing analysis of the mystico-sexual practices and symbolism of Vajrayāna, discusses the place of the wrathful deities in the process of religious acculteration (1966). For example, Yama is an important diety in Hinduism as well as in Mahāyāna Buddhism, yet in Vajrayāna it is Yamantaka, Yama's killer, who is central. Sierksma discusses this in relation to Tibet's absorption of Indian religion, and its fear of the vast and powerful culture of India just over its border.

Image Organization and Social Reality

On the Lineage Tree we have already noticed that along with obviously a-historical deities there are also historical personages, albeit mythologized, such as lamas, teachers and siddhas. More than this, these historical figures occupy the central axis and highest positions. To the best of my knowledge this is not a common feature of other religious memory systems. The value placed on these historical personages obviously refers to the central position occupied by the Guru or living teacher in the Vajrayāna tradition. It also refers to the central mystery of transmission. Above all, it indicates that the spiritual goal is not abstract nor in the past but is an ever-present and living reality, incarnate. In addition, I would suggest that such a positioning of historical figures reinforces a fantasy of growth, of the *process* of awakening. But further to this, these historical figures raise the question of how history is viewed, both within the Tibetan culture and from outside by Western students and scholars. Certainly, given the social and political position of the monastic order in Old Tibet or among the refugee Tibetans, there is another, if somewhat unwitting side to this: the highly structured archetypal symbolism of Tibetan Buddhism is deeply intertwined with questions of social control.

We are facing a *combination* of divine incarnation and theocratic social organization. In the mid-seventeenth century, Songtsengampo claimed himself to be *both* the earthly form of the divine Chenrezig (The Bodhisattva of infinite compassion and most skilled in the process of enhancing spiritual illumination), and the fifth reincarnation of himself as the Dalai Lama. He bestowed

upon himself instantaneous patriarchal and divine authorities. His two wives claimed to be the earthly forms of Green and White Tara. Since that time, incarnation in Tibet always functioned along the interface of spiritual and political authority. This particular quality is deeply etched on the face that Tibetan Buddhism presents to the world.

Social reality, according to Berger and Luckmann, is partial, fragile and in constant need of being recreated or reproduced (1971, p. 121). There are some experiences of such intensity that the social world is strained to the limit as it attempts to collect, channel and explain them as best it can according to the established construction of reality. Such experiences have been called 'marginal', because they occur on or beyond the limits of daily existence. Religious institutions, among others, exist from one perspective as reality-maintenance structures, to gather up the energy of such experiences and to translate their confusion into the language of the established order. It has been suggested that 'death is the marginal situation, par excellence' (Berger and Luckmann, 1971, p. 21); that death and its dark mysteries challenge all social realities. The Lineage Tree flourishes on the awesome power of death. It draws sustenance from it, is nourished by it. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and the Lineage Tree are two sides of the same fundamental image. The Lineage Tree presents a face that is eternal and divine. It shows a reality that is constantly present and coexisting with mundane life, yet separated from it by a gulf of ignorance. Here is shown the parade, the public celebration, the dynastic drama enshrined. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* on the other hand, goes backstage. Between them a powerful story is produced about a continual communion of the living and the dead: an ever-present testimony to immortality.

Tibetan Buddhism belongs to those other great religions which are fundamentally sustained and nourished by death: Egyptian, Voudon, Christianity and so on (Lauf, 1977, p. ix–x; Pallis, 1946; Wilson, 1973; Deren, 1975). But the Tibetan's mapping of the heavens and the underworld is unparalleled in terms of its striking images of unchanging order, meticulous certainty, and empirical authority. The cool matter-of-fact style, and the astonishingly detailed systematization, constantly do battle with the extreme limits of divine and pathological imagery. Tibetan Buddhism's images of Hell, for example, are consistently equal to those of medieval Christianity, and in some respects they are even more bizarre, even more demented. One has to reach into alchemy to find any Western tradition with a similar store of pathological

imagery. In Tibetan Buddhism such imagery is used to reorganize the inner landscape not just of individuals but of an entire culture. These imagistic maps show a restructuring which is not purely spiritual, but which is replete with cultural overtones.

Obviously a fine line exists between religion as a stabilizing influence for a particular social order, or as a vehicle for inner exploration. However, memory systems go further than this. They are active in *evoking* responses at a depth level and then organizing these in a powerful way for a particular purpose. It is not the capacity of symbols to evoke which is special here, but their power to *organize* the imagination. The social and political implications are therefore sensitive in the indiscriminate use of this type of device. For example, propaganda, political ideology and reform could all be consciously constructed in the form of a 'memory system', whereby a commitment for a particular message is both *evoked* and *organized* at a deep imaginative level.

It would certainly seem that some important Renaissance figures were aware of the social significance of memory systems for purposes of reform or for stabilizing society. Giordano Bruno, for example, was deliberately orientating his complex system towards reform. It would also appear that Catherine de'Medici had the idea of social stability in mind when she staged the elaborately ritualistic court festivals of the late sixteenth century in France. Frances Yates has studied this era most thoroughly and continually points to connections between memory systems and social control.

Tibetan Buddhism's persona, as typified by the Lineage Tree, is a statement not of Tibetan spirituality in general, nor even of Tibetan Buddhism, but of an idealized monastic hegemony dominated in its turn by reincarnated lamas. It presents an archetypal display which is bureaucratic in its orderliness and in its rationality.

Conclusion

There is an obvious social dimension to this Tibetan icon and to maps of consciousness, or memory systems, in general. The evocation and organization of subtle imagery relates to certain aspects of the social world and of the dominant power structure. The Lineage Tree is an idealized image of a cohesive hierarchical order, one which is unified around the principle of a direct kinship between the divine and the social hierarchies. The Lineage Tree represents an inner landscape of distinct, separate, yet related, *places.* At these places is stored both secular and spiritual

information. Such a memory system, when viewed from one perspective is evoking and organizing the imagination around inner, or spiritual principles. But from another viewpoint, the imagination is being evoked and organized around a specific social and political world-view. It is difficult to decide just how much of this evocation and organization of the imagination assists the individual's spiritual progress and how much it is captured or neutralized. These memory systems have, so to speak, a hidden agenda.

8—Tibetan Buddhism: An Archetypal Appraisal

'The great priest of this country is called Lama Konju, and adored as a god. He . . . is the Pope of the Chinese and Tartars, called by them God the Father.'—Johann Grueber, Jesuit, 1656
(Markham, 1971, p. 297)

The prime purpose of this study has been to restore imaginative reflection to its proper place, to return reality to fantasy. In addition I wanted to show how Tibetan Buddhism has consistently touched innumerable surfaces of the Western imagination. This book has therefore been an attempt to de-literalize and to remythologize Western images of Tibetan Buddhism. Such a task cannot be achieved without an in-depth awareness of how fantasies about Tibetan Buddhism have become stuck and the imagination devalued. This study has shown that an appropriation of Tibetan fantasy has occurred in areas as diverse as cultural imperialism, consumerized travel, religious organization, psychotherapy and science. As we have seen, despite the seemingly disparate nature of these areas, there is a surprising consistency about the way they have imagined Tibetan Buddhism. This consistency itself tells us much about the nature of Western fantasy-making, about its dreams of power, its longings for authenticity. This study has also critically examined the Western habit of selectively removing and adopting highly organized symbolic practices from traditional cultures.

In a very real sense we now know more about Tibet and its religion than has any previous Western society. This may seem to indicate that we are now able to construct a more accurate picture of Tibetan Buddhism, to refine our appreciation of the 'real' religion. Perhaps also, that unlike our predecessors, our imaginations must now be bounded by an abundance of facts. However, I believe that we should not be constrained by this wealth of so-called infor-

mation. Instead, more surfaces have been created in which to reflect and deepen the play of the imagination.

We are also now in a position to re-examine questions about the *overall* nature of Tibetan Buddhism. What is the archetypal significance of this religion for the West and how does this differ from its place in Tibet?

An archetypal analysis reflects and amplifies images against the background of myth. This process gathers and focuses the material, thus intensifying its imaginative resonance. It lifts the images from their apparent isolation and reconnects them with the complex play of the depth imagination. It allows patterns to emerge, root-metaphors of imaginative activity. The aim of this procedure is not to define, but to intensify, the meanings of the image. As Hillman writes: 'These images have an inexhaustible echo' (1978, p. 176).

The Royal Father in Tibet

As I have suggested, Tibetan Buddhism and its hierarchical systems, its élite lineages of reincarnated lamas, its emphasis on spiritual order, authentication and control, its extensive bureaucracies and its determination to ensure its own continuity, all point to the archetype of the senex or Father. The Dalai Lama sits at the very apex of this system, indeed personifies it. He is the last representative of the ancient God-Kings and belongs to a mythological tradition that includes Monteczuma and the Egyptian Pharaohs. In his classic study of myths of the Royal Father, John Perry writes: 'two kinds of potency were embodied with equal measure in the Royal Father; the fostering of life and the promotion of order' (1966, p. 18; Jung, *CW* 14, paras. 349 ff.). The Dalai Lama, in his traditional Tibetan setting at the heart of a religious system that had absolute cultural power, clearly embodied each of these functions in an exemplary way.

Renewal and Continuity

Studies in the mythology of the divine ruler point to a central paradox: 'while the Kingship, as an institution, embodies and symbolises life, the King himself is mortal' (Paul, 1982, p. 6). A distinction is therefore always made between the King's mortal and immortal bodies. As we have seen, the Tibetan system embraces such a dual-body fantasy. All of the reincarnated high lamas are

considered to be both mortal and immortal. The successive visible bodies are believed to be the tangible, but impermanent, vessels that temporarily house the unbroken, eternal life-energy of a single individual. Nevertheless, the mortality of the body is not just a mere inconvenience, it is a mythological *necessity.* As Perry writes: 'Renewal . . . was a most essential rite of the kingship . . .' (1966, p. 21). The Royal Father must always submit to death in order to demonstrate His power of rejuvenation. However, in the Tibetan example, such a process of death and rebirth is presented not just as a symbolic or ritual act, but literally. The lamas actually *embody* the paradox. The search for new infant incarnations are, above all, ritual confirmations of the power of renewal. Tibetan Buddhism provides this myth of continuity and renewal with a massive architecture. It protects, routinizes and systematizes it.

Much of Tibetan Buddhism's imaginative power derives from this system of spiritual continuity it has created, a system that is different from, yet parallel to, the so-called 'natural' one of kinship. In traditional Tibetan society this parallel religious system based on the succession of Fathers and Sons, spirit and consciousness, did not simply coexist with kinship, it supplanted it as the basis of power and authority (Paul, 1982; Hillman, 1976, p. 83). The establishment of this ritualized reality can be seen as the culmination of senex activity: 'The broad philosophy of life and death, the meaning of the cessation of life and of its passage over into the Beyond, and of its rejuvenation or of its elevation into the status of deification, were all elements in the ideology of the sacred kingship' (Perry, 1966, p. 16; Hillman, 1971, p. 197). Tibetan Buddhism enacts the mythology of the Royal Father as an almost daily occurrence.

In a sense, the 'Royal Fathers' of Tibetan Buddhism have three bodies not two, for they are also the direct manifestation of divinity. Through the high lamas, the cosmic mind intervenes *directly* into mundane life. They are part of a vertical continuity. The Dalai Lama, for example, is not only conceived to be the reincarnation of a human individual, but also of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. The search for the infant successor to the Dalai Lama therefore also becomes the search for Avalokiteśvara's renewed presence on Earth, at the very heart of Tibetan culture.

Order

The Royal Father is the personification of spiritual, social and natural *order.* As Perry points out, 'the King upheld justice by

living it and only secondarily did he enforce it (1966, p. 15). If the need arose to use aggressive methods than these were viewed as being carried out 'on behalf of the deity to promote order and to oppose disorder and chaos or disruption' (Perry, 1966, p. 15). The Divine Father dwells at the centre of this ordered realm, indeed *is* the centre, *is* the order. The maintenance and regulation of horizontal, worldly order is predicated upon a divine, vertical connection. As we have seen, the Lineage Tree is a symbolic representation of such an *axis mundi*, 'a channel of communication between the underworld, the Kingdom and the sky world' (Perry, 1966, p. 31; Eliade, 1959). On its top-most branches sit the high lamas—omniscient, immortal. Tibetan Buddhism in its traditional setting embodied such symbolism, not only in iconographic forms, not just in mythological tales, or in isolated rituals, but in its total structure and in its living individuals. From court-life to public displays, from the intimate details of prayer to the administration of state power, from the design of ritual implements, such as the dorje, to its iconographic symbolism, Tibetan Buddhism celebrated and reproduced this idea of the centre, of divine order and continuity. As we have seen, this *idealized* image of hierarchical order, where everything is checked and assigned a specific place, where control and authorization occurs in the name of omniscient paternalism, is the root-metaphor of Tibetan Buddhism.

On a symbolic level, we have also seen that Tibetan Buddhism goes beyond the simple maintenance of order. It actively *evokes* fantasies that are at the outermost limits of psychic fragmentation and chaos, only to then once again re-establish order and coherence. The extensive use of mandalas in Tibetan Buddhism is a triumphant expression of its capacity to create order from chaos. *The Bardo Thödol* and the Lineage Tree are but two examples of such a celebration. Both successfully confront and transmute the awesome power of death, which otherwise threatens to undermine any social reality, any sense of meaning. This repeated evocation of psychic fragmentation, followed by its resolution into images of order and harmony, serves to reorganize the inner landscapes both of individuals and of an entire culture. Evoking, fragmenting and reorganizing the depth imagination is the central procedure of Tibetan Buddhism as it attempts to ritually transform everyday life.

Tibet has been the only country where tantric masters have held absolute social authority and where a variation of tantric Buddhism has become the popular religion. Under these circumstances, a religious system was evolved in which the whole living structure was symbolic. The mantra, mudra and mandala of meditation and devotion lay within and supported this immense

symbolic edifice. The mantra evoked not just a single god, or personification of cosmic consciousness, but also a living structure. Partly, this was a deliberate and conscious creation of tantric philosophy, which views the mundane and spiritual worlds as being inseparable. There can be little doubt that the high lamas set about attempting to create a religious structure that embodied the strict guidance, control and symbolism prescribed by tantra.

The whole religion, from ritual to organization, is therefore on one level an immense pedagogical device, a symbolic structure designed to house, protect, enhance and produce spiritual authenticity. Such is the idealized portrait of Tibetan Buddhism. But, as Perry points out, often 'the divinity concept was turned to strategic advantage to bolster the prestige of ambitious monarchs' (1966, p. 12). Tibetan Buddhism has been no exception to this. However, I consider this darker aspect to be an *essential* quality of senex imagining rather than an aberration. Fantasies of order can only coexist with those of chaos; good and evil, power and powerlessness, authenticity and deception, trust and betrayal are inseparable. All archetypes are paradoxical and Hillman stresses that such a complex nature is fundamental to the senex; 'no experience can possibly be only beneficial' (1975, p. 80). Structures and systems always carry their own shadow. As Lama Govinda, that venerable Western Buddhist, asks; 'was not the Tibetan religious tradition in danger of suffocating in its own scholasticism and in the unquestioned acceptance and blind faith in its constitutional forms and rituals, whose original meanings had been forgotten?' (1976, p. 193).

Tibetan culture, to a certain extent, evolved ways of expressing this senex ambivalence. The New Year ceremony in Lhasa was such a ritual (Frazer, 1959, pp. 619 ff.; Paul, 1982, pp. 293–5; David-Neel, 1927). For twenty-three days after the New Year, the government was taken away from the rulers and given to an ordinary monk. He then exercised his powers purely for his own financial benefit. Minor infringements of rules were heavily fined and many left Lhasa during this time to escape. As monks swarmed in from the surrounding monasteries, fighting and jostling occurred side by side with prayer and devotion. Disorder and confusion were widespread. The monk who temporarily became ruler would later select another man to be the scapegoat. His face was painted half black and half white, and after he had absorbed the bad karma of the city and engaged in philosophical disputes with the pseudo Dalai Lama, he was driven out of the city by throngs of its citizens. 'The Saturnalia', writes Hillman, 'provided

a destruction of hierarchy, law, order . . . It reincorporated the puer, his dream of freedom' (1975, p. 84). Indirect, symbolic challenges to the regimented power of monastic Tibetan Buddhism were also to be found in folk tales, jokes, poetry and legend, as well as in the anarchic tendencies of its warrior monks and in the disrespectful humour sometimes shown by ordinary Tibetans behind the backs of the lamas (Harrer, 1953, pp. 214, 223). Above all, Tibetan Buddhism had its roots deep in the shadows and confusions of Tibetan culture, history and daily life.

Tibetan Buddhism in the West

Tibetan Buddhism in its traditional setting was a striking manifestation of the Divine Father, or senex archetype, and it is therefore not surprising that it has continued to occupy a similar imaginative place in the West. However, it has evoked senex images that are peculiar to Western cultural history. For example, Tibetan Buddhism throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, was inseparable from the *place* of Tibet. It was called the roof of the world; it was the *axis mundi*, Shangri-la, home of spiritual masters guiding the destiny of humanity down below, the storehouse of ancient wisdom. Tibet increasingly became imagined as a land of harmony and order, set apart from the chaos, confusions and materialism of the world. To enter it was to cross over into another reality. At the symbolic centre of this *temenos*, this sacred space, was Lhasa, 'the Holy', the 'Rome of Asia'.[1] At the 'centre' of Lhasa was the Potala, one of the tallest buildings of its time, a symbolic mountain at whose summit dwelt the Dalai Lama, a 'living god'. As the Himalayas became the cathedral of mountain mysticism, so the spirituality of the Tibetans, living atop those awesome peaks, increased. Despite the range of geo-cultural imaginings about Tibet and its religion, qualities of order, guidance and authority always seemed to dominate.

The West also repeatedly attempted to translate Tibetan Buddhism into the language of science and technology, partly in order to give it status, and partly to make sense of it. A strange assortment of metaphors drawn from feudalism, bourgeois professionalism and space-age expertise similarly reinforce Tibetan Buddhism's place within the senex archetype.

But, despite the apparently similar archetypal symbolism, it would be a mistake to assign Tibetan Buddhism exactly the same place in the Western imagination as it occupies in the Tibetan one.

Archetypes never exist in isolation. Following the myriad traces of Western fantasies about Tibetan Buddhism has revealed the importance of *relationship* in any archetypal understanding. 'The archetypal field', writes Hillman, 'presents a polycentric picture, a theatre of personified powers always implicating one another' (1974, p. 138). In Tibet, the Divine Father was always present, *in residence*. He encompassed the whole country, ordered and guided the destiny of the entire nation. But for the West, Tibetan Buddhism has always been a symbol of Otherness. It represents the Divine Father whom one *wishes* were one's own, or whom one aspires to be. Psychologically many in the West feel orphaned, without a spiritual Father (Bly, 1991; Mitscherlich, 1970). For many Westerners, the senex of their culture either stands discredited to a greater or lesser extent (due to ecological disregard, the arms race, global poverty, spiritual bankruptcy, aggressive paranoia), or is absent ('God is dead'; impotent, sick, insane).

In Tibet, the mantras, prayers and devotions *celebrated* the continued, unbroken *presence* of the Divine Father in their midst, whereas in the West they are primarily formulae of *hope* and of longing for the *absence* to be filled. No wonder that Tibetan religious culture is replete with Oedipal symbolism, the classic family drama (Paul, 1982). But in the West, the relationship to Tibetan Buddhism has been less one of familial certainty and struggle, than one of the youthful fascination and aspiration usually associated with the archetype of the puer. For many Westerners, Tibetan Buddhism has precipitated a reawakened appreciation of the Divine Father: an archaic and fundamental aspect of imaginative reality. Through prayers, rituals, devotions and study, many aspire to the truth to which the senex points. Tibetan Buddhism has allowed many to re-establish a deep and sacred connection with a critical archetypal figure of our time. As Jung wrote, 'with the loss of symbolic ideas the bridge to the unconscious has broken down' (*CW* 9ii, para. 390 fn. 79). The High lamas of Tibet act as true *Pontifex* (bridge-builders: pontoon, punt, pontiff, pontificate) for many in the West. But all bridges have their underside and the passage across is always paradoxical. A fuller understanding of the imaginative range of archetypes such as the senex, their dual nature, their contradictions, plus an awareness of their place in social life, seem essential if one-sidedness and literalism are to be avoided. Certainly, cultural hopes and fears are always part of the relationship to archetypal reality.

This study has shown that Tibetan Buddhism needs to be approached as an *imaginative whole:* that initially it should be consid-

ered and understood as a totality. As such, it provides a *vessel* for imaginative work. What does it symbolize as a container for fantasy? The individual symbolism of its icons, prayers and techniques always unfolds within the arena of this *overall* imaginative significance; they always evoke it and resonate against it.

Through the Gates of Elsewhere: The West and Its Others

The West has always defined and orientated itself by referring to other places and cultures. The past two hundred years have witnessed a remarkable revolution in the Western imagination, in which Eastern, traditional and primal religions have played a crucial role. It is impossible to overestimate the impact that religions such as Islam, Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism, plus the traditional Shamanic and Earth-religions of Central Asia, North America, Africa and Australia, have had on the Western psyche. The past few years have seen both an enriching of fantasy and, most importantly, a deepening of respect not just for these non-Western wisdom traditions but also for the people themselves and their culture. Of course, such a relationship is the paradoxical result of Western imperialist expansion, but this does not reduce the impact such traditions have had on the West.

In his outstanding study of Romanticism, Michel Le Bris writes of the voyage 'through the gates of Elsewhere': 'That Elsewhere, that yearned-for realm where it was supposed that a man might get rid of the burden of self, that land outside space and time, thought of as being at once a place of wandering and a place of homecoming, was: The East' (1981, p. 161). Even though it arrived comparatively late in the history of the West's involvement with 'the East', Tibet, with its religion, was an important manifestation of Otherness in the Western imagination. In one sense the Western fascination with Tibet and its religion was one of the last great flowerings of nineteenth-century Romanticism. It had been preceded by all other great world religions. Before Tibetan Buddhism strode into the centre of Western fantasies late in the nineteenth century, Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, Shintoism and a kind of textural, placeless Buddhism, had already inspired two or more generations of Western artists, intellectuals, scholars and mystics. But within Tibetan Buddhism three imaginative streams converged: the mystical sophistication of the Far East, the Shamanic primitivity of primal religions, and the fundamental mystery of archaic religions such as

those of Egypt and Meso-America. All three streams of fascination have been seminal in the West's re-evaluation of its own spirituality in the twentieth century.

A close understanding of the West's relationship to its imaginative Others has an importance that transcends the apparent exoticism of its individual subject matter. Otherness does not simply imply geographical distance but rather psychological intimacy. Otherness is not a negative phenomena but one that is essential to imaginative life. As Jung wrote: 'In the darkness of anything external to me I find, without recognising it as such, an interior or psychic life that is my own' (*CW* 12, para. 346).

I have been somewhat liberal in my use of the term '*the* Western imagination'. Clearly, Tibetan Buddhism has not been of much concern to most people in the West. Nevertheless it *has* exerted a direct and compelling influence on a sizeable and influential minority. Through them Tibetan Buddhism has played a strong, albeit mainly indirect, role in shaping the contours of Western fantasy-making. As this study has shown, many people, without being aware of it, have indirectly been touched by this Central Asian religion. It has been active in the emergence of the new physics, meditational psychotherapy, transpersonal psychology, the new thanatology, comparative religion and philosophy, as well as depth psychology. Each of these in turn have had widespread influence in the West.

The geographical conjunction of Tibetan religion with the highest mountains in the world has also had far-reaching consequences. Western contact with Tibetan Buddhism coincided with a fundamental re-evaluation of landscape beauty and of wilderness. The purity and sublimity of both 'peaks and lamas' dovetailed at a singularly critical time. As I discussed earlier, experiences in Tibet contributed towards the creation of national parks in Britain and elsewhere. In addition, Tibet and its religion have functioned as a vague and indefinable image of hope, as a Shangri-la, a utopian symbol of aspiration. In the dark times that the West has experienced throughout the twentieth century, this role alone, of keeping visionary idealism alive, has been of seminal importance.

Spirit and Soul: Tibetan Buddhism and Archetypal Psychology

This is an appropriate moment for this study to reflect upon its own methodology, its use of depth, or archetypal, psychology.

While Jung was always receptive to the wisdom of numerous non-Western spiritual traditions, he clearly had a special relationship with Buddhism and in particular with Tibetan Buddhism. Time and again he singled out Buddhism for special mention, bracketing it with Christianity. It is no surprise that he concluded his last, great book, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, completed in his eightieth year, with the affirmation: 'The two great world religions, Buddhism and Christianity, have, each in their own way, accorded man a central place . . .' (*CW* 14, paras. 789, 520).

Buddhism was not just another religion for Jung. It did not just supply him with more material for further amplification. It gave him a crucial confirmation. Certainly the psychological relationship between depth psychology and Buddhism, especially that of Tibet, is itself fascinating. They have mutually shaped each other. Buddhism has reached for depth psychology in its search for an effective Western language to use in translation and in an attempt to validate itself in the Western imagination.[2] For example, Buddhists often point to Jung's intimacy with Buddhist texts, particularly around the time of his death. In addition to the well-known story about *The Bardo Thödol*, it has also been emphasized that he was reading Charles Luk's *Ch'an and Zen Teachings: First Series* on his death-bed (Kaplaeu, 1967, p. xi). Depth psychology, in a more specific way, has often used Tibetan Buddhism as a kind of datum of truth, a fundamental mark of affirmation. Jung and many of his followers have reached toward Buddhism to gain support for their ideas. Many in the West have felt a special empathy between depth psychology and Buddhism. Studies relating the two traditions are common; individuals within the two traditions share many common sentiments; Buddhist groups frequently include sessions on Jung's ideas within their educational programme. Their closeness has also provoked many attempts to delineate their differences, which sometimes has spilled over into a kind of tolerant antipathy.

What do Tibetan Buddhism and depth psychology have in common? Is their meeting-ground at the level of philosophical ideas and specialized practices, or instead do they occupy similar places in the Western imagination?

Traditions rarely bother to reflect upon what they symbolize for a culture. Certainly there is a profound difference between what a tradition says about itself, what its ideas are, and the way others imagine it to be. This study has listened to this other story, to the meta-images evoked by Tibetan Buddhism. Instead of just analysing what the religion has said, this study has also listened to what has been said about it. Unfortunately space has precluded

such a cultural study of depth psychology (Homans, 1979). Never-theless, it would not be too much to assert that both have played a crucial part in the re-emergence of Western Gnosticism in the twentieth century. Gnosticism stresses *direct* experience and knowledge; it refers to direct insight. Christianity, through the centuries after the destruction of its own gnostic tradition, has emphasized faith in, rather than knowledge of, God (Pagels, 1981). The gnostic tradition was driven underground in the West, but continued to survive in alchemy, hermeticism and the occult sciences (*CW* 12, para. 41). The twentieth century has witnessed a reawakening of the desire for direct spiritual insight and quite clearly Jung saw his own work as an important factor in this spirit-ual renaissance.

Both depth psychology and Tibetan Buddhism address ultimate questions: what is the basic stuff of existence; what is consciousness; what is meaning; how can we search for truth; how can we live it? Both address the problems of excessive conceptuality and liter-alism. Both point to the necessity of a new kind of language in order to deepen insight (Hillman, 1972; Guenther, 1969). But care must be taken not to prematurely collapse the one into the other, thus blurring important distinctions. Tibetan Buddhism can easily add depth psychology to an already rich store of therapeutic techniques it has taken from the West. True to its syncretic Mahāyāna origins, Tibetan Buddhism was quick to seize upon Western therapy as an effective complement to its impressive array of introductory meth-ods, as an *aid* to meditation. But depth psychology is not just an-other series of therapeutic techniques. It is a *Way* of the imagination whose roots can be traced back through Western alchemy, through the Renaissance hermetic traditions, to the early Neo-Platonists (Hillman, 1978). Jung himself acknowledged alchemy as 'providing the psychology of the unconscious with a meaningful historical ba-sis' (*CW* 14, p. xiii).

However, there is most assuredly a religion *in* depth psychology. Despite his occasional disclaimer to the contrary, both Jung and many of his followers have engaged in spiritual, rather than psy-chological, questioning through his ideas and used them in a search for ultimate meanings (*CW* 14, para. 518a). A genuine spiritual resolution is the fundamental outcome of Jung's work. It is this religion *in* Jung's work that has allowed it to be so easily integrated by Tibetan Buddhism (and also by Christianity). Both of these religions have used depth psychology as a way of trans-lating dogmatic theology into contemporary psychological lan-guage. But there are strict limits to the value of this practice. To

a considerable extent it undermines the spirit of Jung's work. Whilst respecting religious systems he was also profoundly cautious of them as ways of individuation, of soul-making in the modern world.

If Tibetan Buddhism in the West has a close but somewhat imperious relationship to depth psychology, the reverse has also often been the case. Tibetan Buddhism can easily be reduced into providing just another set of symbols for the process of amplification, as yet another mechanical confirmation of depth psychology's fundamental tenets.

Probably the most seminal attempt to address this question has been made by James Hillman in his essay 'Peaks and Vales' (1976). Given at a series of public lectures on the relation between psychotherapy and sacred traditions, Hillman's essay has been appropriately edited to follow immediately from the one on Tibetan Buddhism given by Tarthang Tulku, Rinpoche. Hillman asks a fundamental question: what is the difference between *soul* and *spirit*, between an archetypal psychology and a spiritual discipline? The 'peak', in the title of his talk, refers to the world of the spirit, the overview, the purity and detachment from the world's confusions down below. It symbolizes the search for peak experiences, for highs. The peaks are places of clarity, transcendence, of the sublime, of air, ice and immortality. The 'vales' are, on the other hand, the place of soul-making: moist, deepening, involving, shadow-laden, without overview. The language of the vales is that of the image. Care, attention and even devotion to the particulars of image is the way of deepening the soul.

The dualism of spirit (or mind) and body (matter), established as dogma in the West at the Christian Councils of Nicaea (787) and Constantinople (869), effectively denied the sacred reality of images. The imagination as the metaxy, the middle realm, the middle way, was lost. Archetypal psychology, according to Hillman, attempts to reconnect with, and operate from, this rejected perspective.

For Hillman, the difference between soul and spirit depends entirely upon the attitude towards fantasy-images, especially towards those associated with psychopathology, or with the anima, or with polytheism. If attempts are made to ride these images towards the peaks, to transmute them into fantasies of growth, development and wholeness, then one is engaging in spiritual practice. If, on the other hand, the images are embraced, and a descent is made into their intimate depths, then one is involved in soul-work.

Depth psychology certainly has a religious tradition within it, a desire to reach the peaks, to gain overview, to embrace a sublime unity. Conversely, Tibetan Buddhism has its own tradition of imaginative psychology, its alchemical distillations, its erotic obsession with imaginative details, its insistence on the reality of the symbol. If archetypal psychology protects the image from its imperious usurpation by the spirit, then Tibetan Buddhism can help protect the sacredness and numinosity of the image from its therapeutic trivilization.

When he poses the dichotomy between spirit and soul, peaks and vales, Hillman is not asking a conceptual question but presenting an archetypal fantasy, a reoccurring imaginative tension critical to Western inner understanding. There is both a fundamental affinity and a contradiction between Tibetan Buddhism and archetypal psychology. They each symbolize the polarities of this paradox between soul and spirit, yet both contain within them the echo of the other. Buddhism generally treats fantasies as distractions from meditational one-pointedness. But one traditions distractions are another's *prima materia*, its raw material. Distractions can equal soul-at-work. Archetypal psychology, like alchemy, makes a study of illusions, fantasies, distractions. It asserts that these illusions *are* reality. Following the alchemical advice, *festina lente*, (make haste slowly), archetypal psychology moves patiently through the reality of the illusion. Meanwhile, Vajrayāna tries to pass quickly through their unreality only to finally assert that reality and illusion, nirvāna and samāra, are identical. Eventually the two traditions meet on either side of the same mirror.

Symbolically, the encounter and alignment between Tibetan Buddhism and depth psychology is an expression of the *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, the separation and resolution of psychic opposites. The 'alchemical Jung' refers to these conjunctions in terms of the process of *solve et coaqula*, the dissolving and coagulating of forms. Buddhism similarly refers to it in terms of rūpam śūnyatā śūnyataiva rúpam, the process of forming and emptying. From such a complementary perspective, archetypal reality and śūnyatā are identical (Avens, 1980).

Both traditions celebrate the irrepressible desire of the imagination to invent and reinvent itself. They both say that this fantasy-making is the fundamental property of reality (Jung, *CW* 14, para. 503). Both have their roots deep in an imaginative, sensual, eroticism; in the ecstasy of 'emptiness' (śūnyatā). In Tibetan Buddhism this is exemplified by the tantric image of Yab-Yum: a Bodhisattva, or Buddha, in ecstatic embrace with his female consort.

Similarly the eroticism in Jung's conception of reality can be seen in his love of alchemy. Alchemy, it has been said, was the last effort in the West 'to produce a science based on an erotic sense of reality' (Brown, 1959, p. 316). Tantra and Western alchemy share many fundamental images. At one point in his work, Jung equates the alchemical Mercurius with the 'continual cohabitation' of tantra[1] (*CW* 13, para. 278; *CW* 14, paras. 235, 580).

The relationship between the Western 'way' of the imagination, as exemplified by archetypal psychology, and Tibetan Buddhism has been relatively short but intensely fruitful. The relationship between them both has been mutual, engaged and active; it has taken place deep within the *overall* fantasy evoked in the West by this religion from Central Asia.

Tibetan Buddhism in Exile

The last decade has witnessed an event of enormous significance both in the history of Tibetan Buddhism and also in the history of world religion. It has seen the end of a great spiritual tradition in its ancient form. In a single stroke, Tibetan Buddhism has been ousted from its place of absolute socio-religious power over a whole country, into its present position of being a very small religious and cultural sect in exile. Its roots among the scattered communities of Tibetan refugees still remain deep, but the people themselves are desperately small in number. Even among these indigenous Tibetans, the relationship to their religion is slowly changing, and with it the religion itself. Whilst still acknowledging the authority of the high lamas, especially the Dalai Lama, these communities of exiles have achieved a measure of independence from the traditional spiritual system. The young Tibetans especially, through education, work and other contacts, are more open to the new ideas found in exile than are their older relatives. The latter tend to focus strongly upon the religion and the Dalai Lama in order to retain their sense of cultural identity. These new ideas may well prove disruptive to the traditional religious hegemony of Tibetan monasticism (Palakshappa, 1978).

The 1959 Chinese invasion of Tibet also affected traditional routes of communication between Lhasa and other Buddhist communities throughout the Himalayan region. For example, in northern India, the closure of the borders and the destruction of religious culture in Tibet have effectively prevented the usual, regular, religious and cultural interchange between Ladakh and

Lhasa. This threatens to lead to religious isolation and even stagnation in Ladakh (Snellgrove and Skorupski, 1977, pp. 135 ff.).

Deprived of its extensive roots within Tibetan culture, the religious system has quickly responded to the interests and dedication of a significant, but small, number of Westerners. The relationship between the exiled Tibetan tantric masters and their Western disciples is vital to the survival of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan or Vajrayāna Buddhism is not just a highly abstract system of ideas, but, true to its tantric origins, is inseparable from its organization and daily rituals. When the whole religious structure *is* an essential symbol, when spiritual continuity is the fundamental metaphor, then clearly the question of change is a sensitive issue. How will Tibetan Buddhism evolve in the West? Tarthang Tulku, Rinpoche, one of the new generation of Tibetan teachers in America writes: 'This is a delicate situation. From the viewpoint of the Tibetans of serious traditional lineages, how much should we change, or could we change or not change? . . . It is simply too soon to give an answer to this question' (1976, p. 108). He expresses concern that premature change may cause the depths of the teaching to be lost, leaving only a superficial understanding.

Tibetan Buddhism as a whole is a living symbol. Its contours in the West are being shaped, indeed have already been shaped, by the imaginative efforts of Buddhists, scholars, scientists, poets, writers, seekers and travellers. *Continuity* is the central issue from both the Tibetan and the Western perspectives. The Tibetans are concerned about the unbroken lineage of lamas, about the continuity of teachings, and indeed of the very survival of their cultural identity. The ancient problem of spiritual succession across generations has now become one across cultures. For the West, Tibetan Buddhism has been a link in its imaginative connection with *memoria*, with the ancients of its psychological past. Lama Govinda states this succinctly:

> If the spiritual perversion and brutal force of our machine civilisation should ever extinguish the living tradition of the Bardo Thödol and the spiritual culture that was handed down to us from ancient Tibet, humanity would be deprived of its last connection with the great mysteries of prehistoric times. (1976, p. 192)

But Tibetan Buddhism, as we have seen, also provides the West with a vital connection to its *future* spiritual aspirations. As we move into the shadow-filled closing years of the twentieth century, it seems likely that Tibetan Buddhism and the Western way of the imagination will continue to offer much to each other.

NOTES

Chapter One

1. e.g., in G. Welbon's well-known study *The Buddhist Nirvana and its Western Interpreters*, he detours from scholastics only briefly, to discuss Wagner and Nietzsche. There is no mention of Evans-Wentz, let alone Jung, Govinda, Blavatsky or a whole host of other important Western commentators on Buddhism. The 'Western' imagination is, of course, a sweeping term. In the case of Tibet the social routes of fantasies are complex: those of the 19th century were dominated by aristocratic patriarchs, later by upper middle-class scholastics and so on. See my discussion of this in *The Myth of Shangri-la;* also for an understanding of wider debates about the West and its Others, see M. Bernal, *Black Athena;* and E. Said, *Orientalism.*

2. Some of the most important introductions to Tibetan Buddhism that are available in English, in addition to those by Hodgson, Schlagintweit and Waddell, include:

W. Anderson, *Open Secrets*—a modern, popular account; it is very detailed and uses the language of psychotherapy and the new physics.

J. Blofeld, *The Way of Power*—a popular account of the basic rituals and philosophies; comprehensive and scholarly like Anderson's, but from a more traditionally religious perspective.

A. David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*—a very popular account by a remarkable woman traveller, scholar and Buddhist.

W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga and Its Secret Doctrines*—an important, early and scholarly study; somewhat outdated but a pioneering work by a Western Buddhist.

A. Govinda, *The Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*—a scholarly and inspirational study by a Western Buddhist; this is a very detailed and fairly sophisticated introduction.

H. H. The XIVth Dalai Lama, *The Opening of the Wisdom-Eye*—a scholarly and instructional introduction from within the tradition itself.

Gampopa, *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*—an early scholastic systematization dating from 11th-century Tibet.

C. Humphreys, *Buddhism*—contains a chapter on Tibetan Buddhism; somewhat superficial but widely read.

M. Pallis, *Peaks and Lamas*—very popular in its day, it blends an introduction to Tibetan Buddhism with descriptions of its place in Tibetan society, as Pallis travels through that country.

R. Paul, *The Tibetan Symbolic World*—a psychoanalytic study of Tibetan Buddhism in its cultural setting.

Sangharakshita, *A Survey of Buddhism*—a comprehensive study that locates Tibetan Buddhism within Buddhism as a whole.

R. Stein, *Tibetan Civilisation*—a most detailed scholarly study that includes Tibetan Buddhism within its full cultural milieu.

D. Snellgrove and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*—a scholarly and also very readable account of the history of Tibetan Buddhism.

G. Tucci, *Tibet*—A highly readable introduction that condenses the vast experience of this famous Tibetologist.

C. Trungpa, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*—a very popular and inspirational introduction written in a highly untraditional way.

These are only a few of the many excellent texts now available, but give some idea of the range of perspectives from which introductory accounts have been written. The Tibetans, of course, had their own scholarly tradition which sought to systematize their religion. For example, Gampopa (op. cit.).

3. *A note on gender and language:* Whilst in my own writing I have tried to avoid the use of 'he' or 'man' when both genders are clearly being referred to, it is unfortunately not possible to avoid such archaic usage when quoting from a diverse array of historical texts. *A note on Tibetan and Sanskrit terms:* Every author on Tibetan Buddhism faces the problem of presenting these foreign words in such a way as to be consistent and accurate, yet so as not to complicate and confuse. This is made even more difficult in this study given the wide historical range of the texts that are used as primary sources. It is sometimes difficult to tell whether early and modern accounts refer to the same thing, so great are the differences in spelling of Tibetan words. In addition, some authors have deliberately set out to keep the Tibetan and Sanskrit words uncluttered and simple, quite prepared to sacrifice strict scholarly accuracy. Finally, many technical words, such as mantra, mandala and karma, have become incorporated into English in recent years. I have attempted to be as consistent as possible, while keeping things simple.

Chapter Two

1. For details and overviews of the early period of Western contact with Tibet see G. Woodcock, *Into Tibet;* F. de Filippi, *An Account of Tibet;* J. MacGregor, *Tibet—A Chronicle of Exploration;* C. Markham, *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa;* I. De Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans;* G. Sandberg, *The Exploration of Tibet.*

2. See J. Hillman, 'Peaks and Vales', for a succinct discussion of the associated imagery of peaks and spirituality.

3. e.g., M. Goldstein complains of this 'chronic religious indigestion', in his 'Serfdom and Mobility'.

4. Hillman, op. cit., suggests that a certain kind of spirituality wants to be free of the limitations of time and place, and constantly seeks to transcend history. See also his discussions in *Puer Papers.*

Chapter Three

1. The idea of the Father as a particular symbolic figure is sufficiently well accepted in the West to require little explanation. From psychoanalysis to hu-

manistic psychology, from a wide range of mythological and religious studies to critiques of patriarchy in feminist theory, there is a general understanding of the metaphor of the Father. The image of the Senex takes the metaphor clearly out of both an individualistic and a literal family context. The work of James Hillman has been of immense value in sketching the extensive details of Senex phenomenology, e.g.: 'On Senex Consciousness'; 'The "Negative" Senex and a Renaissance Solution'; 'Senex and Pure' (in *Puer Papers*).

2. On this shadow side of Tibetan religion, see K. Butler, 'Encountering the Shadow in Buddhist America'; or M. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1913–1951*.

3. See R. Aven's critical assessment of Jung's ideas on the mandala in *Imagination is Reality*, p. 83; also J. Thomas's 'The Bodhisattva as Metaphor to Jung's Concept of Self' is an extensive discussion of Jung's development of the concept of Self in relation to Eastern religion. See also J. Hillman, 'Psychology: Monotheistic or Polytheistic?'

4. J. Hillman, 'The Great Mother, Her Son, Her Hero, and the Puer', p. 83. The theme of the 'absent Father' is a major psychological issue in the 20th-cent. industrial societies: see, in addition to Hillman's work, the other essays in *Fathers and Mothers;* also A. Mitscherlich, *Society Without the Father.*

5. The use of the word 'son' is of course symbolic and as such is used throughout Tibetan Buddhist literature; e.g., *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* refers to the Buddha's spiritual sons, or to the sons of noble birth. However, within Tibetan Buddhism there is unquestionably a doctrinal belief that a male body is the preferable vehicle in which to attain enlightenment.

6. Quite clearly this present study, with its concern for a kind of structural analysis, owes much to a senex perspective. Also, the senex wants to claim everything for itself. For example, the fantasies of structure and organization are not exclusive to the senex. Hillman comments: 'Other archetypal perspectives—Luna, Hermetic, Heroic, Apollonic, etc.—organise the world with different logics.' (The "Negative" Senex', op. cit., p. 91.) Continuity, also, can express fantasies apart from those of the Senex: sentiment and nostalgia can be just as much a part of the Mother or Anima; the continuity of progress, evolution and growth can reveal the Puer or Hero at work in the psyche. Also, this negating aspect of senex phenomenology is not necessarily 'negative'. It is a fundamental aspect of its style. The problem is how to work imaginatively within this archetypal pattern. See Hillman, 'The "Negative" Senex'.

Chapter Four

1. e.g., J. Long, 'The Death that Ends Death in Hinduism and Buddhism', in E. Kubler-Ross (ed.), *Death: The Final Stage of Growth*—this book discusses comparative thanatology, or arts of dying. D. Cooper in *The Death of the Family* uses *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* as an existential touchstone; S. Grof and J. Halifax-Grof in their LSD research into death and dying comment on the value of The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* as a map or mirror to reflect individual experiences ('Psychedelics and Experience in Death'); J. Hicks uses the Tibetan example as an exemplary paradigm in a proposed philosophical synthesis between Eastern and Western ideas on the dying process (*Death and Eternal Life*, pp. 399–403, 414–17); P. Kapleau has drawn up a guide for assisting a dying person which draws substantially from the Tibetan system *(The Wheel of Death);* in R.

Moody's well-known study of cases in which individuals have returned to life after being pronounced dead, an exact correspondence is claimed between his findings and the Tibetan book (*Life After Life*, pp. 119 ff.); M. Cohen has pointed to deep similarities in attitudes towards death in Western and Eastern thought by comparing the Tibetan account with Plato's Phaedo ('Dying as a Supreme Opportunity)'.

2. In her paper 'A Body for God: An Interpretation of the Nature of Myth beyond Structuralism', Waghorne discusses the way that the gods have been replaced by structures. She writes, 'The gods here are secondary: the pattern or structure of the myth is primary.'

3. M. Foucault, e.g., has tried to chart the major historical styles of epistemo-logical organization and coherence. According to Foucault, the theatre, the parade and the spectacular are found in the Renaissance as ways of organizing knowledge, whereas in the classical period it is instead the catalogue and the encyclopaedia. Unlike in the Renaissance, language was unproblematical in the classical period. The Renaissance used similitudes to establish coherence. In the twentieth century we have again returned to a perspective in which language is a question and where reference to a deep structure is used to produce organized knowledge. See M. Foucault, *The Order of Things;* M. Sheridan, *Foucault: The Will to Truth,* pp. 39–78. The Tibetan 'systems' are generally based on the power of similitudes, and even the Tibetan attempts to categorize and abstractedly order such works as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* are overwhelmed by imagistic coher-ences and relationships.

4. e.g., see F. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* for a full discus-sion of the use of the Kabbalah by Renaissance Hermetism and Christianity. Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *Adam and the Kabbalistic Tree* proposes a synthesis of Kabbal-ism with contemporary science and psychology; N. Drury, *Inner Visions,* discusses the Kabbalah in terms of the Tarot and Surrealism. In each case the *structural* organization of imagery is paramount.

5. See previous chapter for a fuller discussion.

6. See M. Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic* for a discussion of practical science in terms of the relationship between the visible and the invisible. See also F. Jacob, *The Logic of Living Systems* for a discussion of the way modern biological science has shifted its foundation from the observable forms to the invisible deep structures.

7. e.g., see I. Illich, *Medical Nemesis* for a discussion of Western medicine and death; see also J. Choron's study, *Death and Western Thought.* This book is useful, not so much for its evolutionary view of the struggle to accept death as total annihilation, but as a display of the profoundly rich and intensive images that death has evoked in the imagination of Western philosophers. J. Head and S. Cranston (eds.) in *Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery* take the opposite stance to Choron and present copious illustrations of the West's belief in reincarnation and its struggle to gain wide acceptance. They are correct to point out that reincarnation has, in various forms, a long history in Western thought. But it has been imagined differently in different eras. These *images* and the resulting metaphors need to be reclaimed in order to sustain reincarnation as an *imagina-tive* realization.

8. This privatization of the individual, with its emphasis on subjective, per-sonal space, indeed the whole consolidation of the human, individual subject, is one of the most profound developments of the past two hundred years. The works that I have found useful include M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality;* id.,

The Order of Things; A Britten, *The Privatised World;* S. Hughes, *Consciousness and Society.* One crucial result of this process is that the imagination has become associated with, even imprisoned within, the idea of the experiencing subject. According to Jung, the alchemists put 'the greater part of the soul *outside* the body' (CW 12, para. 396).

9. G. Welbon in *The Buddhist Nirvana and its Western Interpreters,* pp. 303–4, refers to Bodhisattvas as spiritual heroes, because of their conscious decision to refuse nirvāna and reincarnate instead; see also Head and Cranston, op. cit., pp. xv, 13. A. Toynbee and A. Koestler *(Life After Death,* p. 33), briefly express their concern about the individualism associated with traditional reincarnation philosophy and its mystical practices. One could, for example, just as easily read the Bardo text from the standpoint of the trickster archetype, with its use of magic words, its mapping of the routes between the dayworld and underworld, as from the perspective of the hero.

10. J. Hillman points out that oppositional thinking (so characteristic of *The Bardo Thödol,* with its wrathful/peaceful, clear/dark light dualities) is often associated with the archetype of the Hero *(The Dream and the Underworld).*

11. See R. Sardello, 'Death and the Imagination', and J. Steffney, 'Symbolism and Death in Jung and Zen Buddhism'; W. Anderson, *Open Secrets,* pp. 35–7, gives a clear discussion of the paradox in Buddhist reincarnational belief.

Chapter Five

1. e.g., in a recent essay, 'Reflections on the Transmission of Buddhism to America' by C. Prebish, the point is made that Buddhism must address scientific matters, and must assert its relationship to science *(Understanding the New Religions,* ed. J. Needleman and G. Baker).

2. M. Pallis's discussion of karma in his very popular *Peaks and Lamas* is full of a wonderful mixture of images; it is a true transition piece. See J. Choron, *Death and Western Thought,* for a historical anthology with numerous discussions of karma. Tarthang Tulku's *Time, Space and Knowledge* is an elegant and sophisticated statement about the relationship between science and spirituality. See my 'The Mysticism of Immensity' for an analysis of the attempts to synthesize science and religion in the 1920s and 1930s.

3. Also Hensoldt, 'Occult Science in Thibet'. In his classic film on Tibetan Buddhism, *Requiem for a Faith* (1974), Houston Smith also stresses Tibet as being the last living link with the ancient mystery religions, as does Fields in *How the Swans Came to the Lake,* pp. 105–6, 285–7, 305, 308; G. Asche is quoted in F. Hitching, *The World Atlas of Mysteries,* p. 240; C. Humphreys, in *Buddhism,* suggests that Tibetan Lamaism is a mixture of the best and the worst in Buddhism. The concern about the purity and authenticity of the teaching is more commonly voiced in reference to Tibetan Buddhism than for any other school. Humphreys implies a superiority in the sheer number of spiritual masters in Tibetan Buddhism (p. 189). See also Fields, op. cit., pp. 98, 274; also A. Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism,* p. 13.

4. Anderson, *Open Secrets,* pp. 5, 14–15, 21; R. Metzner, *Maps of Consciousness,* p. 50; S. Larson in *The Shaman's Doorway,* p. 141, writes of an 'introverted sacred technology'. L. Le Shan, despite considerable sensitivity and detailed discussion, scarcely avoids reducing Eastern mysticism to science, rather than the reverse, and certainly never treats both as part of an imaginative play *(The Medium, the Mystic, and the Physicist).*

5. Since Jung's path-breaking psychological study of mandalas, they have become almost a household word (C. G. Jung, CW 9i). They have been associated with maps of consciousness, computers and information technology (Metzner; opt. cit., pp. 9, 10, 11, 41, 43, 48); or in terms of a variety of artistic and spiritual practices (J. and M. Arguelles, *Mandala*). Often they are used in rather superficial comparisons, and mandalas are discovered everywhere (e.g., Head and Cranston, *Reincarnation*, p. 431; and L. Blair, *Rhythms of Vision*, p. 123).

6. See J. Hillman's comments on the need to free the *image* of 'empirical' from its 'encrusted cliché of scientism': *Healing Fiction*, p. 32.

7. e.g., Le Shan (op. cit., pp. 267–8) writes of 'serious mysticism' and 'long arduous training' and of 'goals'; Anderson (op. cit., pp. 15, 118) writes of 'astronauts' and a 'finely tuned human organism'; Fields (op. cit., pp. 98, 299) quotes reports of Tibetan spiritual prowess; A. Elkin uses Tibetan psychic specialization in a comparison with Aboriginal shaman-like figures: *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*, pp. 57–66. See also P. Matthiesson, *The Snow Leopard*, p. 59; W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga and its Secret Doctrines;* and A. David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet.* J. Schier, in 'The Tibetan Lamaist Ritual: Chod', analyses a specific practice as a psychosexual therapeutic technique. Maraini, in a humorous way, calls the lamas 'spiritual industrialists', (*Secret Tibet*, p. 172); see also de Riencourt, *Lost World*, p. 257.

8. Metzner (op. cit., p. 41), in a discussion of mandala symbolism, implicitly suggests that the deliberate construction and use of mandalas is somehow superior to unstructured, individually spontaneous expressions. In his essay 'Concerning Rebirth' (*CW* 9i) C. G. Jung gives a fairly extensive discussion of the differences between systematized psychological processes and unstructured ones.

9. Even Aboriginal religion has partly become incorporated into a universal religious system under the images of 'shamanism' and 'rites of passage'; e.g., Elkin (op. cit.) situates Aboriginal parapsychological powers within a shamanic framework and also draws Tibetan occult practices into the debate. The image of shamanism as a universal *system* is a product of the Western imagination. It is only a short step from the fantasy of shamanism to the use of shamanic *techniques* in a whole range of humanistic and transpersonal therapies, in Shamanic workshops, and in any number of brainwave laboratories. I am not being critical of such a process but merely pointing to the root-metaphor on which it is based.

Chapter Six

1. So often Westerners want to claim all of Tibetan culture and religion for male, monastic, esoteric Buddhism. See M. Goldstein, 'A Study of Ldob-Ldob', for some discussion of the monastic 'underworld'; or A. David-Neel, for a fuller description of religious practices in Tibet (*My Journey to Lhasa; Magic and Mystery in Tibet*).

2. Interestingly enough it seems as if the first American to become ordained in Tibetan Buddhism, R. Thurman, met with a certain disapproval from his teacher Geshe Wangyal about his decision (R. Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake*, p. 293).

3. e.g., J. Malcolm, *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession*, pp. 50, 84; P. Coukoulis in *Guru, Psychotherapist and Self*, p. iii, writes that 'the guru is considered to be a person who has made partial or appreciable strides towards self-realisa-

tion before he attempts to assist others in establishing an intimate relationship with the Supreme Guru. Broadly speaking, the same personality attainment pre-requisites and goals apply to the Jungian analyst . . .'

4. The use, by Eastern Religions in the West, of highly conservative organiza-tional forms peculiar to advanced capitalism is widespread. But there has been considerable reflection and criticism about the power relations inherent, e.g., in the healing professions with their hierarchies, their mystification of the expert–patient relationship and so on. The same is true of all forms of professionalism—teachers, technologists, lawyers etc. These metaphors, which seem harmless by virtue of their simplicity and obviousness, are conduits and vessels for the imagi-nation. They are the faces of fantasies.

5. Cf. R. Paul, *The Tibetan Symbolic World*, which discusses the whole system of Tibetan Buddhism in terms of the symbolic struggle between father and son, a kind of transmission of spiritual paternity; see also H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: (India–China–Tibet–Japan)*.

6. Interestingly, *Tibetan Inroads*, a play by S. Lowe, shows the main protagonist being physically castrated by the Father, by the Senex power of Tibetan Bud-dhism. He has shown literally what is indeed a pervasive symbolic feature of the monastic Buddhism of Tibet.

Chapter Seven

1. For a discussion of the Lineage Tree, see M. White, *Karmapa, the Black Hat Lama of Tibet;* J. Blofeld, *The Way of Power*, pp. 110–17; G. Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, pp. 67 ff. For some details about the Kargyud-pa sect in the West, see R. Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake;* and I. Oliver, *Buddhism in Britain.*

2. e.g., in his study of Celtic mythology Layard arranges the archetypal per-sonae in terms of a diamond. Such a shape had been previously used by Jung in his study of the phenomenology of the Self (CW 9ii), but Layard goes further than Jung and refers to the diamond, the overall organizing pattern, in connec-tion with Vajrayāna. Hence the archetype of the Self is seen to parallel the indestructable diamond body of Vajrayāna (J. Layard, *A Celtic Quest*, pp. 202–10).

3. There has been debate, for example, around the comparison between Jung and Lévi-Strauss's theories of both deep structure and of various forms of cognition, e.g. V. Gras, 'Myth and the Reconciliation of Opposites: Jung and Lévi-Strauss'. With regards to archetypes, Jung stressed that he was referring to categories, not of reason, but of the imagination.

4. In his comments on Dorje Chang, Jung replaces the image of a 'saving power' with that of the 'archetype' (CW 11). Sometimes there is not much differ-ence in meaning between these two images, especially when the idea of archetype is used in a religious sense.

5. There is also a shadow side to this mystical drama. E.g., T. Wylie ('Mar-pa's Tower: Notes on Local Hegemons in Tibet', p. 282) claims that the famous towers which Milarepa built were more like fortresses used by Marpa to consoli-date his power. R. Stein similarly points to the strategic value of Marpa's towers (*Tibetan Civilisation*, p. 150).

6. (My underlining.)

7. It should be mentioned that the Bon-po religion in turn absorbed consid-

erable Buddhist teachings. So it was a two-way process. Both Bon and Buddhism absorbed much of the earlier religious folk tradition of Tibet (Stein, ibid., p. 191). P. Kvaerne discusses the harmony and confusions between Buddhism and traditional Tibetan religions, including the occasional persecution of followers of Bon ('Aspects of the Origin of the Buddhist Tradition in Tibet').

Chapter Eight

1. Several early commentators were struck by the parallels between Catholicism and Tibetan Buddhism, even to the extent of postulating that the Tibetan system had borrowed from the Christian one: e.g., see E. Schlagintweit, *Buddhism in Tibet,* p. 70.
2. Other Western 'languages' commonly used by Tibetan Buddhism in translation are those of existentialism and phenomenology—e.g., see the works by H. Guenther.

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